

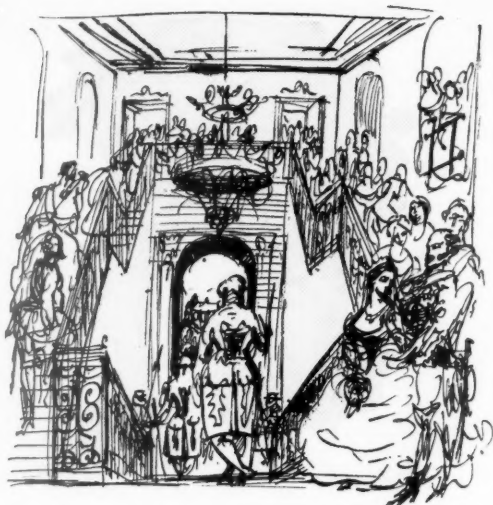
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Vol. CCXVII
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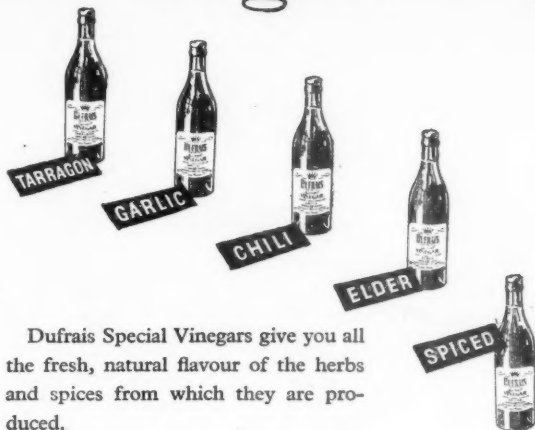


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Weetabix
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Weetabix is all
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POPULAR PACK
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They provide a happy means of imparting piquant, appetising flavours to dishes of every kind.

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NEW WORLD No. 1430 series GAS COOKERS

PRODUCT OF Radiation Ltd

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"I find it excellent made with water only"



"I make mine with half milk, half water"



"I like mine made with milk"

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Full-cream milk of the highest quality—in combination with other of Nature's best foods—is an important ingredient of 'Ovaltine'. You can therefore make your cup of 'Ovaltine' with added milk, milk and water, or water only.

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MAKES MILK GO FURTHER

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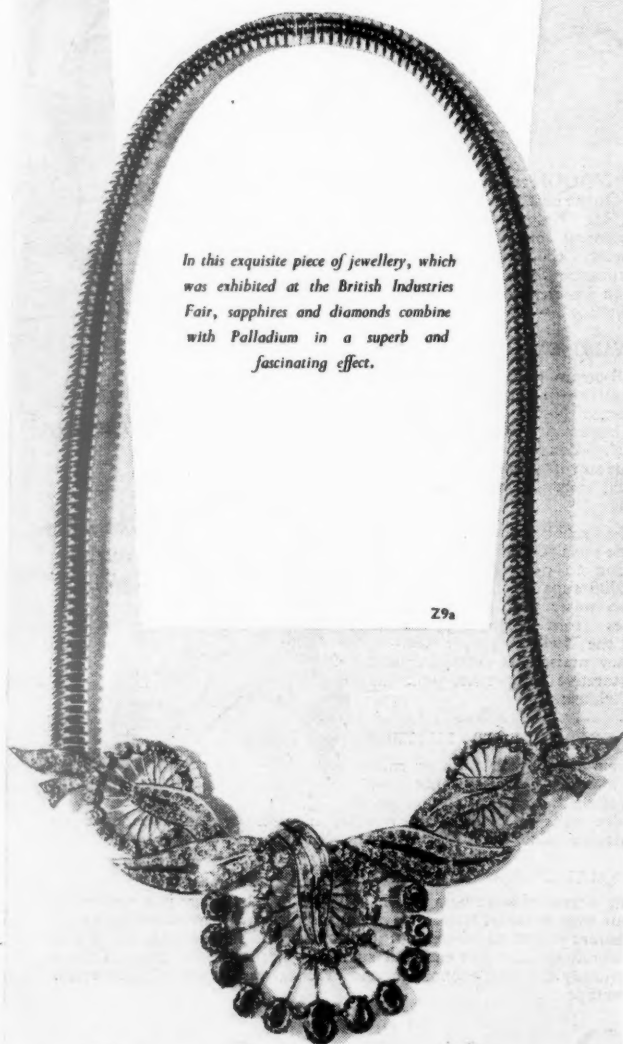
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The World's most popular Food Beverage

P.736A

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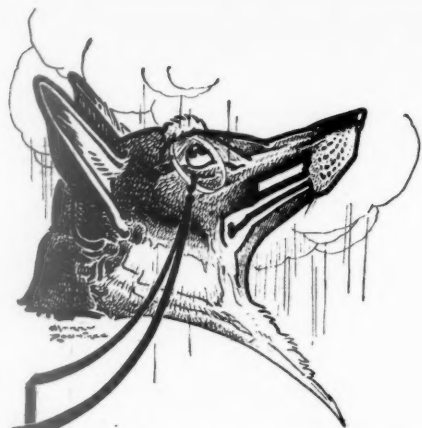
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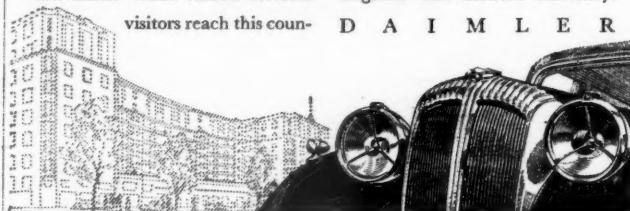
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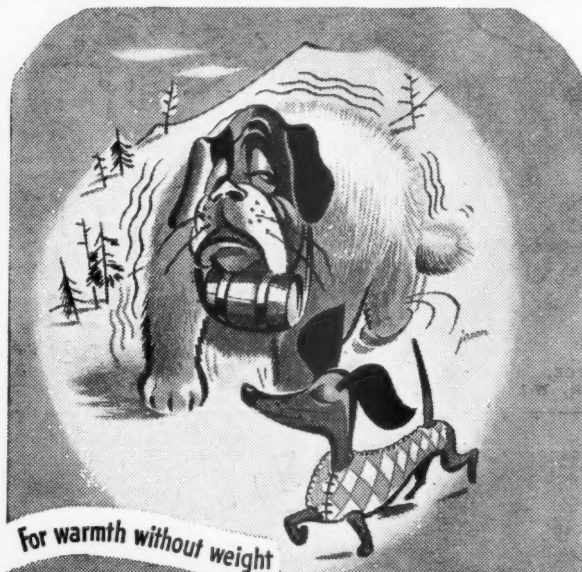
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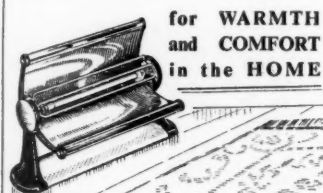
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The good 'tempered'
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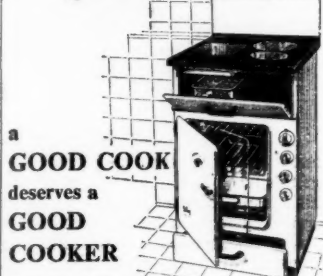
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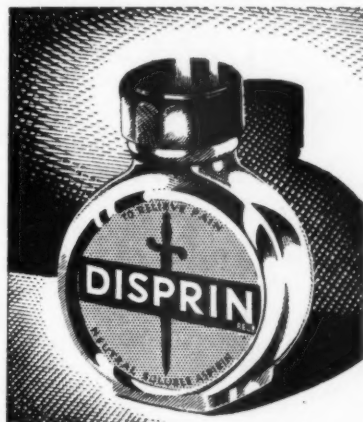
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Disprin tablets, dropped into water, dissolve with a gentle effervescence to produce a neutral (*non-acid*) solution of calcium aspirin which is pleasant to take and easy for the blood-stream to absorb. Bottle of 26 tablets 2/-. From all chemists.

DISPRIN is recommended for all those conditions
in which, hitherto, aspirin would have been taken



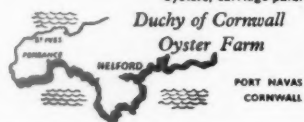


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and fondest love
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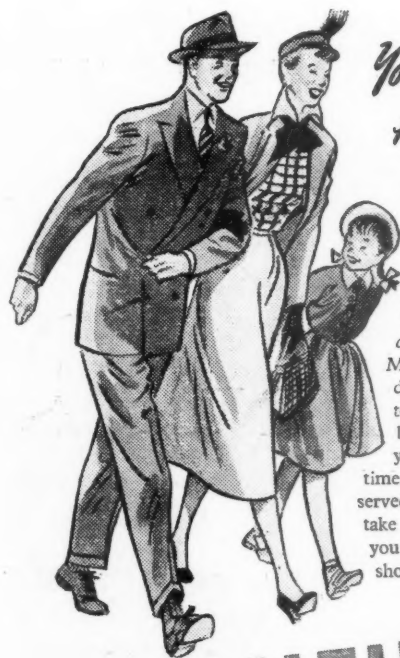
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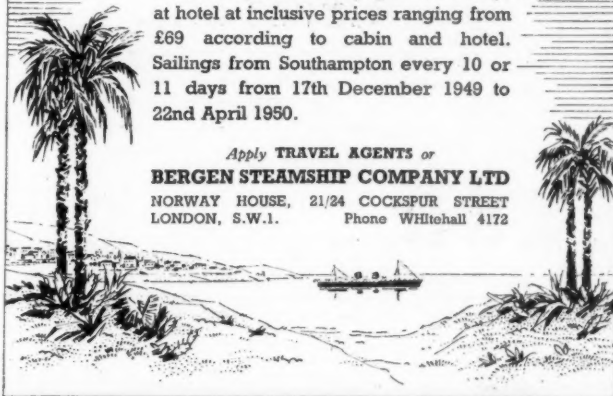
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- ★ Made throughout to Ekco standards of complete reliability.

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Model A104 for A.C. mains, including tax **22 GNS.**

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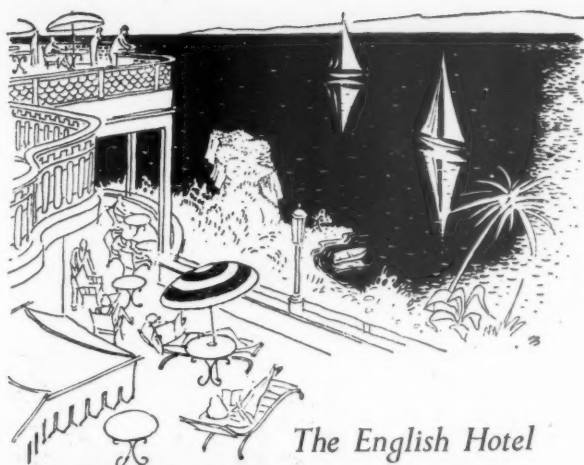
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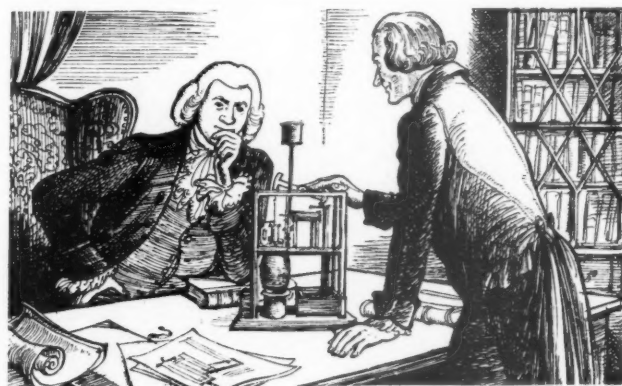


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BATHJOYS REGD

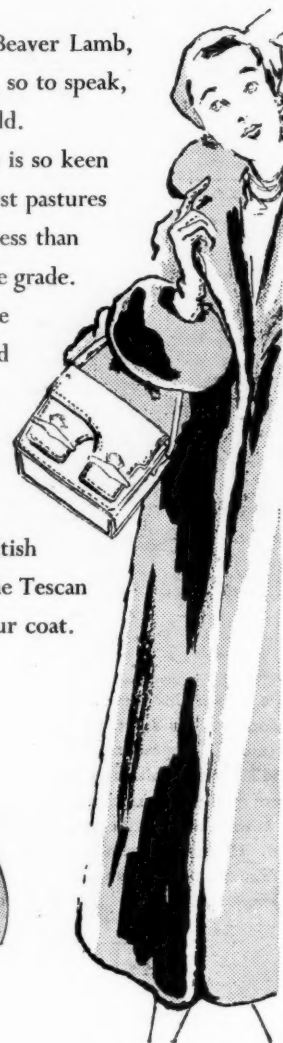
— you used to call them Reckitt's Bath Cubes



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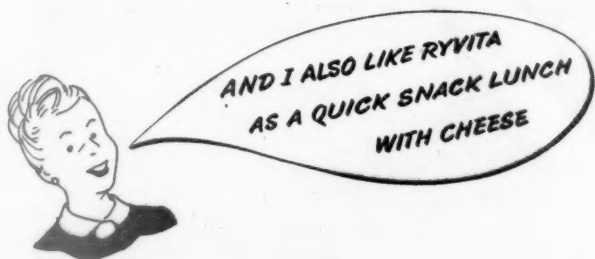
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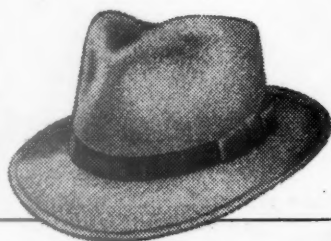
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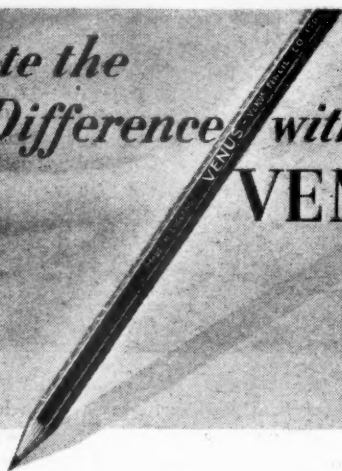
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CHARIVARIA

MEMBERS of a Wiltshire children's cinema club are allowed to take their grandmothers to the shows. Several elderly ladies now hang around the cinema looking for temporary grandchildren.

§ §

Vicious Circle Ahead

"Solve Your Problem Ltd. (Agency), urgently require Office accommodation for own use."—*Newspaper Advt.*

§



The ghost of an Early Victorian waiter is said to appear in an old London chop-house. But only after repeated table-rappings.

§

Members of an orchestra travelling by special train rehearsed in their separate compartments.

Keeping well together by the occasional use of a communication chord.

§ §

"Two events will take place at the same time if no entrants in both."—*Regimental sports programme*

Couldn't the tea interval be squeezed in, too?

§ §

It is claimed that by harnessing the tides the whole country could be electrified. And "A.C." would at last mean something to the amateur electrician.

"At the last Election," says a writer, "the nation gave the Government a blank cheque for its future planning." Drawn on the South Bank.

§ §

A bull which had to be treated in Hereford was found to have swallowed broken bits of a cup and saucer. Somehow, in his poor confused mind, he'd turned the old saying inside-out.

§

Tchaikovsky in Disgrace

"RUSSIAN OVERTURES
SEEN AS MAJOR
DIPLOMATIC DEFEAT"
Trinidad paper

§

According to a naturalist, wasps sting more at the beginning and at the end of the summer. Fortunately they sting at only one end of the wasp.



§

When a bomb went off in the middle of a political speech in a Central American town the audience mistook it for a comma.

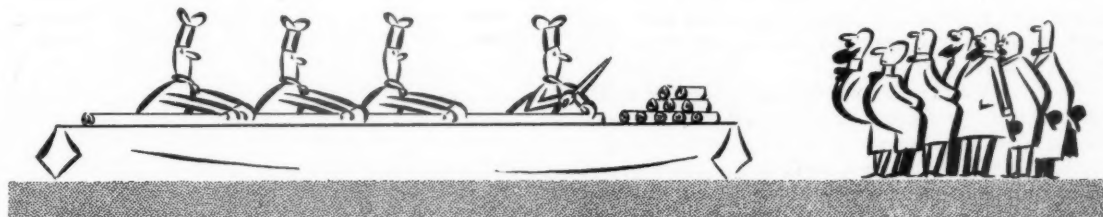
§ §

Bags of Fun

"Their Bristol association was, I believe, in 1914-15, so both must be appreciably longer in tooth than they were—grand old trousers whose sense of humour has kept them going."—*Bristol evening paper*

§ §

Thirty-two Swiss bakers have visited England to study our confectionery-making—attracted, perhaps, by one of our jam-roll recipes.



“... AND A BOTTLE OF RUM”

IT was the schooner *Hesperus* that sailed the wintry seas, and the skipper had taken his little daughter to bear him company; and it was the schooner *Hispaniola* (about to sail from the port of Bristol), of which Squire Trelawney wrote:

“She lies at anchor ready for sea. You never imagined a sweeter schooner—a child might sail her—two hundred tons.”

There is no evidence that the skipper's child attempted to sail the *Hesperus*. But a child did sail the *Hispaniola*. Jim Hawkins took her from a point near Cape of the Woods to North Inlet, and thereby hangs rather a curious rope's end.

It would seem that the production designer of Walt Disney's “Treasure Island” has fitted out a new *Hispaniola*, which is rather like a man of war and rather like a coaling bark, and rather like Captain Cook's *Endeavour*, and, to give us some idea of the thing, *The Times* has reproduced a picture of the good ship that found Australia.

It is near enough to the drawing of the ship which lies some way south of Haulbowline Hill, in the map of the Island made by Lloyd Osbourne, which started R. L. Stevenson's tale.

She is three-masted and square-rigged. For the benefit of landlubbers, this means that the three sticks have eight outsize pocket handkerchiefs fastened on to them by bits of wood at the top, and a number of triangular pieces of material strung to the pointed thing at the front end. We sailors call these three sticks fore-mast, main-mast and mizzen; they are chiefly found in bottles to-day and nobody bothers to count the sails. The supposed date of Treasure Island was 1750 or 1760 or thereabouts; Dr. Livesey had fought at Fontenoy and Long John Silver pretended to have served under Hawke.

The book itself was begun at Braemar in 1881, continued at Weybridge and finished at Davos, none of them notable seaport towns, and I am sorry to say that, though the *Hispaniola* may have put out from Bristol with all that show of timber and haberdashery, she lost a lot of it, either on the high seas or somewhere off the Island shore.

The only mention of her rig during the voyage out occurs after Jim Hawkins' bit of eavesdropping from the apple barrel in the waist of the ship:

“Just then a sort of brightness fell upon me, and looking up, I found the moon had risen, and was silversing the mizzen-top, and shining white on the luff of the fore-sail.”

On this I would only remark that, unless the main-mast had fallen overboard (like the first mate) by this time, it must have been very bright moonlight and a very big barrel; and there is no further mention of the rig until Jim, deserting from the stockade, and paddling Ben Gunn's coracle, has cut the *Hispaniola's* hawser and set her adrift. After that we get plenty:

“The *Hispaniola* was under her mainsail and two jibs.”

“The mainsail hung drooped like a banner.”

“The boom swinging to and fro, until the mast groaned aloud under the strain.”

“And again dodging the boom, I ran to the colour lines.”

“The jibs I speedily dowsed, and brought tumbling to the deck, but the mainsail was a harder matter.”

“Of course when the schooner canted over, the boom had swung outboard and the cap of it, and a foot or two of sail, hung even under water.”

Between the first and last of these quotations Jim had sailed the schooner halfway round the Island, under the verbal instructions of a drunk and wounded bos'n who was trying to assassinate him, and brought her in to shore.

But what had happened to all those great square bits of frippery tied to all those sticks. It seems fairly plain that the *Hispaniola* had sunk by this time to a two-master, rigged fore-and-aft; or if not, why all this trouble about the mainsail and the boom? Consider the wide clearance on the *Endeavour* between the bottom fringes of the drapery and the promenade of the boat.

But the old mizzen-top was still there. That had stayed put, and very fortunate it was for Jim Hawkins, for he clambered up the shrouds to the cross-trees and, from that position, shot old Hands dead.

What the poor little ship looked like by the time it got back, with its wounded captain and its remnant of a crew, it is difficult to imagine. I reckon she was something between a ketch and a yawl, and I hope that this will not worry Mr. Walt Disney's continuity man.

But queer things happen at sea. Let me quote from my copy of the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*—a reprint made apparently in its first year of issue—two-thirds of the way down the column headed

Bow Wow

“*Bowsprit*. A large spar or boom running out from the stern of the vessel, to which (and the jibboom and the flying jibboom) the foremast stays are fastened.”

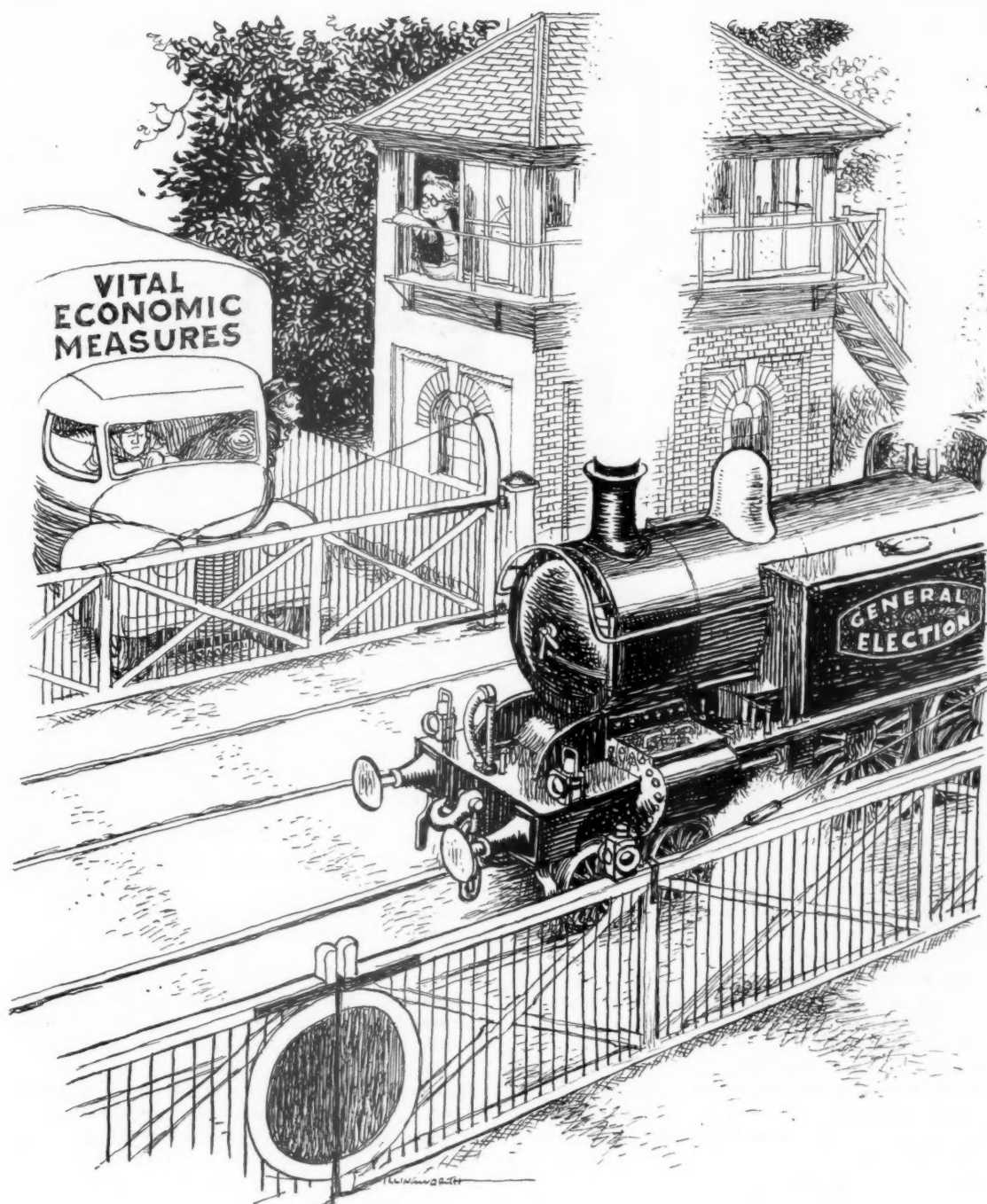
How many a young mariner must these words have misled! This, of course, was precisely the accident that happened to the Bellman's ship in “The Hunting of the Snark.”

EVOE

In an Oxford College

THE cornucopiæ of Grinling Gibbons

Would sport far fewer grapes and berry clusters,
Pomegranates, figs and ears of wheat and ribbons,
Had he but known the proper use of dusters.



OVERDUE

"Can't you get that thing out of the way?"



"Now, that looks a nice place."

ON COOKRIDGE HILL

BELOW me lies a city in the haze—
 not of sweet summer,
 whose golds are all sealed fast
 in the brain's beehive-cells—
 but overcast
 under cloud-shadows:
 quaker, dove, wave-greys
 lapping sad trees that shed slow tears of rain
 ere they likewise are shed.
 But overhead
 the winds' cool fingers shred
 the clouds to currycomb-tatters
 and I can smell
 so many winds that quest like eager hounds
 over this hill—
 Oh, surely I can tell
 whence they have come:
 this, from the Irish Sea—
 it knew the swell
 of the Atlantic deeps before, in leaps,
 it crossed green Ireland
 and the narrower waters,
 to break across the Pennines' ridge-and-fell.

This other wind—
 it wooed the Lakes' lovely daughters
 and was rebuffed,
 and so comes whimpering here.
 Its fellow, bolder, hurtled from the rim
 of the Arctic ice:
 the grey North Sea tamed him
 and warmed him and tanged his breath with salt.
 Here—or I am at fault—
 comes one that combed the stubbled Yorkshire plain
 to finger every dry milk-kernelled grain
 that neither mouse, nor gleaner, nor partridge found:
 yet 'tis a lazy wind that loves the ground
 and never will spread pinions to mount
 above these clouds into the sunlit blue.
 They bring the grey day's dullness to account
 on this high hill
 and it shall pay their bill—
 or its successors on a not-far day
 shall pay
 the debt
 and get
 a white receipt of snow.

R. C. SCRIVEN

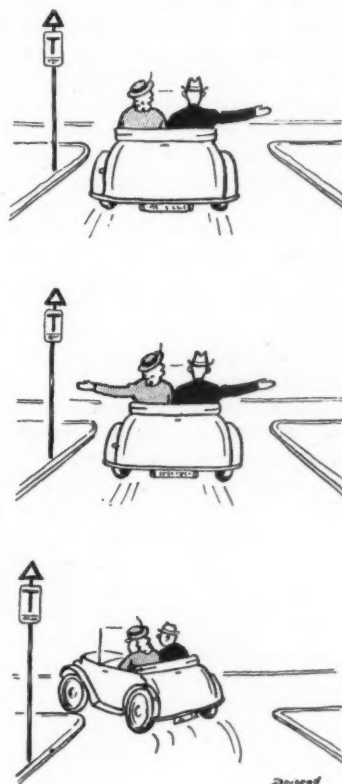
AMERICAN COMMENTARY

X

GOOD EVENING. Easily the most hopeful sign that the dollar gap may soon have narrowed down to something like shouting-distance has been the to all intents and purposes official statement by Secretary Doghouse that the administration has now decided to accept Mr. Birdseed's suggestion for stopping the dollar leak—that is, of course, if (and it is a big "if") Mr. Birdseed finally makes one. It is one thing, though, to convince Congress that the only way of closing the gap is by checking the leak, but it is quite another thing to persuade the Humdinger Committee that the only way of checking the leak, short of losing the peace, is by stopping the drain; and it is far from clear who, if anyone, could stop it right now except maybe Senator Bulkhead. I should perhaps explain—in view of the President's clarifying statement that Mr. Doghouse's words, as quoted, were not much improvement on what he actually did say—that the Humdinger Committee is the body currently engaged in investigating charges by Senator Brickenbacker of Hideho against ex-Secretary Hayride that he repeatedly failed, during the inter-depression period, to investigate charges against Mr. George R. Jeeperson of having on more than one occasion stated, openly and before witnesses, that he favoured investigating Senator Brickenbacker. Now, the interesting thing has been that all the evidence so far has gone to show that at the time in question Mr. Jeeperson was, in fact, a member of Congress, a non-smoker, and a vice-president of the Blue Horizon Blast Furnace Corporation; which, as you can imagine, has given the real-estate lobby about as good an opening for sideswipes at the President over dollar handouts as they have had since his Pancake Tuesday speech to the Associated Organ-Grinders. Do not, however, be tempted to assume from this that it is a by any means foregone conclusion yet that we are going to see Mr. Hayride take an all-out anti-witch-hunt ticket at the forthcoming

elections as a protest against the, in his view, penny-pinching administration policies on bubble-gum. For one thing, there is a quite considerable likelihood that bubble-gum will now be put back on the list of one-way exports under the Doghouse plan; and for another thing nobody has so far been able to shake Mr. Birdseed's testimony that Mr. Jeeperson was, to his personal knowledge, fully and completely on the level between the end of convertibility and the beginning of last winter's baseball season, and was, in fact, to the best of his recollection, still on it when the Blockbuster agreement extended the dollar gap to South Amnesia. Admittedly, this still does not explain why a body like the Incorporated Wire-Pullers should have voted, as they did, to run Mr. Jeeperson for President in preference to a candidate like the well-known Mayor O'Hooey of New Bedstead; in which matter Senator Brickenbacker is well and truly on record that if they had known as much as he did about Mr. Jeeperson they would have voted to run him clear down the real-estate lobby, through the dollar drain, and half-way up the San Fiasco Valley. Just how much help this would have been in distracting attention from the storm-signals flying over most of our commodity markets right now is the kind of question being asked by those who are urging a new and vigorous approach to the long-run dollar-sterling problem and are afraid the President is not keeping his ear quite close enough to the international ground, maybe for fear of a new and vigorous approach by Senator Brickenbacker. I am not suggesting it would be wise for any administration spokesman to take up this position on the floor of the Senate, with Congress in its present mood; but what has turned most of our forecasts upside-down has been the realization that the President may try to squeeze a last-minute measure of tariff-revision through Congress this session, thus making it almost certain that the Supreme Court will hand the Clam-

Chowder Bill back to the Senate, who could then either return it to Congress or give it to Mr. Birdseed with instructions to lower the storm-signals, turn the forecasts right way up again or take a one-way ticket to South Amnesia. The alternative, of course, would be to inform the Associated Organ-Grinders that any attempt to squeeze Senator Brickenbacker through the dollar gap before the President has found who put bubble-gum on the administration's export program would almost certainly mean a two-way showdown between the dollar-spending democracies and the penny-pinching plutocracies and might even precipitate a clarifying statement by Secretary Doghouse. In other words, there is not much point in wondering just what problems we can expect to emerge from the current political set-up, but you can fairly safely assume that one of the toughest will be the next American Commentary.—Good-night.



Council of Industrial DESIGN



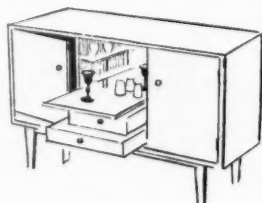
INTELLIGENCE has just reached me, via the *Daily Express*, that the American male is beginning to eschew pyjamas in favour of the nightshirt. This news follows so closely the announcement of the pound's shattering devaluation that suspicion of collusion is immediately aroused. Is this another body blow at the cotton industry? Does the term nightshirt really mean the pyjama-jacket with its ugly implications of a fifty per cent cut in Lancashire's exports to the United States? I don't know yet; we must wait and see.

If the news is accurate it can be tackled in two ways. The first method, one commonly employed, so it is often alleged, by a certain section of British industry, is to laugh the whole thing off—

"I have before me, gentlemen," says the chairman of Texto Textiles Ltd., "a report from our agent in the States who says that Americans are now wearing nightshirts (*Laughter*) and that we ought to switch over immediately from pyjamas to nightshirts." (*Loud laughter.*)

"And' nightcaps, of course," says a director.

"They get quite enough of *those* from Scotland," says the entire Board in unison, holding its sides and bellowing in uncontrollable mirth.



"Our agent has a nice sense of humour, gentlemen," says the chairman, "but I'm afraid we cannot possibly follow his—er—instructions. (*Laughter.*) It's really too ridiculous—nightshirts! Why he'll be telling us next that Americans actually wear those abominable ties we see on the films. As though anybody *would* wear such ghastly things!"

The meeting breaks up in renewed gales of laughter.

The other method of course is



to accept the fact that the customer is always right, to design nightshirts to his taste, and sell them. Texto Textiles Ltd. is, I admit, only one somewhat exceptional and purely imaginary firm, but its views on design, in a slightly less preposterous form, can still be heard in odd corners of most British industries. There are people who still believe that "British Made" ought to be a sufficient guarantee of excellence for anyone overseas, and that design—like tariffs and blocked currencies—is something new-fangled, cooked up by interfering busybodies to hamper international trade.

Now let us turn to Mrs. Webster of Ealing. Mrs. Webster has an unerring eye for poor design: from a shop full of kitchen equipment she is certain to buy the frying-pan that becomes a colander after three or four applications of sausage, the draining-board modelled after the



Cresta Rum, the teapot with the dripping spout, the baking-tin that won't fit the oven, and so on. And we mustn't forget Mr. Webster of the same address. Mr. Webster's book-ends spend most of their days on the carpet, his streamlined pen runs almost as smoothly as a bus crossing the Giant's Causeway, his radio locates every programme in a saw-mill . . . It is only by accident, in fact, that anything in the Webster household works at all.

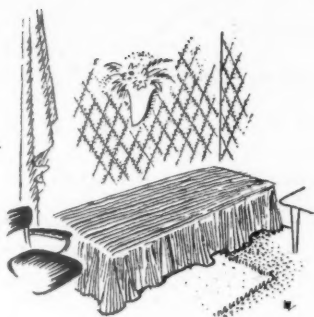
Texto Textiles Ltd. and the Websters (also fictitious) are the two principal targets of the C.I.D., a body that makes war on malfeasance in the realm of industrial design, tracks down ugly customers and injects them with a therapeutic dose of commonsense. The Council of Industrial Design—to give the body its full title—is trying to clean up, wherever necessary, the shape, pattern and performance of British industrial products, primarily in the interest of the export trade and secondly on behalf of the Websters. It preaches assiduously, airing the accepted principles of industrial design to fairly unresponsive audiences up and down the country, and it practises what it preaches with a steady stream of exhibitions—big ones like "Britain Can Make It" and "Enterprise Scotland," and little ones like "Textiles and Textures" which is now on view at Murray House, Petty France, S.W.1.



The Council's next major effort will be for the Festival of Britain in 1951: it has been made responsible for the selection of all industrial products to be exhibited and already has a Stock List of entries of considerable length.

The Council of Industrial Design was set up in 1944 by the Coalition Government under Mr. Churchill. Dr. Dalton and Sir Stafford Cripps, it should be added, are two of its most ardent advocates. It is financed by Government grants made through the Board of Trade and reports to Parliament annually. Like the beauty it seeks to promote, its value is in the eye of the beholder. Some people regard it as a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense, a useless drain on public funds and the last word in bureaucratic interference with the freedom of the manufacturer; to others, who feel we live in a jungle of inefficiency and bad taste, it is just what the medicine-man ordered. To the rest—the other forty-odd millions—it is something they've never heard of.

Nothing upsets the C.I.D. more than the assumption that it is chiefly concerned to give British goods a "new look." One of its main tasks, indeed, is to discourage the



excesses of contemporary design, the futile "streamlining" of static articles, the abuse of new materials and the modern brand of ostentation which can be as tawdry and inefficient as the worst horrors of mid-Victorian rococo. Take the post-war car, the plastic and chromium fantasia which some British manufacturers, to their credit, have so far refused to imitate. According to independent American witnesses it is too big for the ordinary garage, too low in the chassis to clear a humped bridge, too low in the body to give a clear view of the road, too long in the bonnet to park easily, too heavy on petrol, too high in price and too fulsomely equipped with self-emptying ash-trays and other gadgets. This is industrial design run riot.

In Britain there is little danger, at present, of such prodigality, for the designers, in their struggle to win the manufacturers' confidence,

are extremely cautious. They move warily, with one eye on tradition and the other on the allocation of scarce materials. The manufacturer moves warily, too, with one eye on the designer's hair (no industrial designer can afford to look arty) and the other on costs of production and demand schedules. And all this optical activity makes for a discreet and calculating approach to the problem, rules out unnecessary dash and flashiness and underlines homely good looks very heavily. As they should be underlined.

One of the Council's publications, *Accident or Design*, says that design is what makes a thing "easy to make, easy to use and easy to look at." Mark that, Mrs. Webster! Yes, and *you*, Webster! Easiness is a goal that should certainly appeal to people ensconced in the Welfare State; but too many of our manufacturers and too many of our households still seem to prefer things the hard way, hard in the "hard currency" meaning of the word—hard to make, hard to get and hard to face up to. Happily the indications are that their numbers have diminished sharply since the war, and much of the credit for this must be awarded to the Council of Industrial Design and the pioneers whose preaching brought it into existence.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



AT THE PICTURES

The Secret Garden—The Chiltern Hundreds

ONE recognizes the mood of *The Secret Garden* (Director: FRED M. WILCOX) as that of a Jane Eyre sort of best-seller—the novel by FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT is apparently familiar to people who read the right things in youth—but it is unusual on the screen, and this film achieves it unexpectedly well. However much one may be inclined to deride parts of it as examples of Hollywood Englishry, the fact remains that it has many good points, and all who aren't scared away by the prospect of a film built round two child stars (and even some who are) should find it entertaining.

The children are MARGARET O'BRIEN and DEAN STOCKWELL, and the fable is about a small orphan girl who comes from India to live in Yorkshire with her uncle, who has a spoiled, bedridden little son. There is a locked, neglected garden in the grounds of the manor, and what with one thing and another she gets the boy into it regularly and secretly and in due course it bursts into Technicolor, and the boy and, incidentally, his embittered father are cured, and everything in the garden, both metaphorically and literally, is lovely. Warned of the story beforehand I should have gone to see the film with no enthusiasm at all, but there's a great deal of good in it. Some of the scenes between the two children—I imagine these are almost straight out of the novel—are handled by all concerned with a skill that makes them remarkably convincing and full of fun without being either "whimsy" or sentimental; there are many good visual touches (I remember a shot of the girl walking across a broad beam of light as she leaves the ship); and the uneasy Jane Eyre mood—midnight explorations of corridors, dark

hints from the intimidating housekeeper—is conveyed very well. As a whole—uneven, but oddly and unexpectedly interesting.

Stagey is hardly a strong enough word for *The Chiltern Hundreds*

[*The Secret Garden*]

Victorian Gothic

Mrs. Medlock—GLADYS COOPER;
Mary Lennox—MARGARET O'BRIEN

(Director: JOHN PADDY CARSTAIRS): everyshred of it belongs to the stage; and yet A. E. MATTHEWS, repeating his stage part from WILLIAM DOUGLAS HOME's play, is so good that he carries the whole thing. This isn't film acting, any more than the writing of the piece is film

[*The Chiltern Hundreds*]

Post-War Tudor

Benjamin Beecham—CECIL PARKER;
Lord Lister—A. E. MATTHEWS

writing; it's stage dialogue and stage business, often very bright, superlatively done. It may be that Mr. MATTHEWS (at nearly eighty) is starting a career as a real film actor; but the point is that this part is conceived entirely in terms of stage farce, and the opportunity for film acting simply isn't there.

Nor is the opportunity for film technique. This story of laughable goings-on among the charming aristocracy (doing their own housework) presupposes the presence of a comfortable matinée audience out to delight in that aristocracy's "typical" behaviour, and most film audiences will unconsciously make the slight mental adjustment and even feel gratified that there is nothing to distract them from the straightforwardly amusing lines and actions of a set of "typical" people.

Allowing for the very limited aim of this cheerful entertainment, my only criticism would be that speed is not successfully achieved, in a film, by speed of dialogue alone. The constant succession of quick speeches (bang - bang - bang - bang, with no pauses between) can defeat its object by becoming wearisome.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The London shows are difficult to be certain of: many of the programmes will have changed when these words appear. No harm in mentioning two of the new ones, at least one of which will be in next week's article; the sumptuous Hitchcock production in Technicolor of *Under Capricorn*, and an exciting piece of U.S. Navy flying heroics, *Slattery's Hurricane*.

Most interesting releases are *Dear Mr. Prohack* (21/9/49), a bright version of ARNOLD BENNETT's trifle, and the Technicolor *Joan of Arc* (27/4/49)—rather flat-footed but spectacular and with passages of very good acting.

RICHARD MALLETT

THE COSMIC MESS

THIS column has read with interest (in *The Times*) about the proposal for a World Calendar which Miss Elisabeth Achelis has brought from America. Our own Astronomer Royal is in favour of it, so hold your fire for a moment or two. "The world calendar would divide the first 364 days of the solar year into four equal quarters, each having 91 days. In each quarter the first month (January, April, July and October) would have 31 days and the others 30 days." (So dear old February would go into the 30 class.) "The 365th day, known as Year-End Day or World's Day, would be a holiday, interposed between Saturday, December 30th, and Sunday, January 1st, and referred to for convenience as 'December W.'" This column was married on December 31st, and the due celebration of a wedding anniversary as well as New Year's Eve has never made the start of the New Year very satisfactory. If it is to be a World Holiday as well—! However, one must not be selfish. "A date would fall on the same day of the week every year . . . Christmas Day would always fall on a Monday, which Miss Achelis regards as an excellent arrangement." But, wait a minute, Miss Achelis. Are you quite sure? Saturday, shops shut: Sunday, shops shut: Monday (Christmas Day), shops shut: Tuesday (Bank Holiday), shops shut. And, four days later, Saturday, shops shut: World Holiday (shops shut) and Sunday (shops shut). Seven days out of ten! How is mother going to feed her young? January 13th, this column reckons, would always fall on a Friday, which is a pretty discouraging start to the nautical year: and would not April, July and October be the same? It would seem so. St. Patrick's Day would always fall on a Sunday, and those with birthdays on March 31st, May 31st, or August 31st, would have to celebrate on another day. Oh, and "Leap Year Day, every fourth year, would be interposed between Saturday, June 30th, and Sunday, July 1st, and would be a holiday." More shopping trouble.

Talking of anniversaries, this column received a "Press Release" from Geneva about the death-day of Johann Strauss, composer of the "Blue Danube" Waltz. The great man died on September 25th, 1849, "and the date happens to fall on a Sunday this year. Next year", the complaint continues, "it will be on a Monday, the following year on Tuesday. Thus, like all holidays, it rambles clumsily and illogically through the days of the week. If the World Calendar, which is to be voted on by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its present session at Lake Success, N.Y., were in effect, the date of Strauss's death would come on a Monday every year."

That is all very well: but this column's birthday is on September 24th—so it would come on a Sunday every year. This column is not so keen as it was on people drawing attention to its age, however benevolently: but there are many columns which like it still; and on the whole they prefer a week-day celebration, when other columns can refresh them suitably in public places or take them to a play. This column hopes that one of the United Nations will take the point up.

Another thing. After much thought and toil, this column reckons that November 5th, or Guy Fawkes Day, would always fall on a Sunday. Now, that is pretty silly, for James I would surely not have opened Parliament on a Sunday: and the noisy Guy-nonsense is not very suitable to Sundays now. But this column has always been against the commemoration of the bungling Fawkes. It has always said that history (and the young) have grossly neglected the British workman who successfully burned down most of the Parliament building in 1834. The date of that was October 16th, though it is not even mentioned in Mr. Whitaker's *Almanack*; and under the World Calendar, this column reckons, it would always be a Monday. It might be called Parliament Day, and those who think it a good thing to burn down Parliament, and those who do not, could let off fireworks together without disturbing our Sunday peace. Otherwise, with Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, St. Patrick's Day, April 1st, Guy Fawkes Day, and this column's birthday all coming on Sunday for evermore, the World Calendar is going to cause an awful lot of unsuitable Sunday behaviour. A. P. H.



"Okay, we'll kick against the wind, but facing the television cameras."

HOW TO RENOVATE A CHEST OF DRAWERS

TAKE a very small oak chest of eighteen tiny drawers, two missing, eleven of the rest having string instead of drop-handles. Take it from a relation's attic and put it in the room where you type and iron and visitors sleep. Place over the top an embroidered tray-cloth.

Decide, one day, that you will begin renovating this chest by going through every one of its sixteen tiny drawers. Pull and bang them out and collect an ink-eraser, a dead tap-washer, a label saying "9 Brackets," a quantity of oily fluff and black sand and a sepia photograph of you wearing a little belted sack and clinging way up a croquet mallet. Prop this photograph on a mantelpiece until even you are bored with it.

Decide, another day, that now you will begin renovating this chest, which is of the excellent workmanship of a bygone era and held together, except here and there, with dovetails. Start with its yellow varnish. Attack the top with emery paper. Dig at it with a chisel. Scrape it with an old knife. Scrape it with a new knife. Rub it with steel wool. Scrub it. Knock it over. Wipe up the black sand and take away the tray-cloth.

Next day, carry into the room that houses this chest a tin of

sea-green high-gloss paint, opened, a cluster of old newspaper, a jar of brushes, a tin of scouring powder, some rags and a bowl of water. Carry them all at once, so as to experience that interesting moment of immobility when you cannot put anything down until you have put something else down first. Pick up the old kitchen chair. Paint a trial piece, grasp it while you decide that the oilcloth upholstery must be scrapped. Work your way down to some tattered canework, fiendishly laced through weeny holes plugged with the old bits of cane some chair-mender didn't unpick. Work at it for half an hour. Look at your chair now. It has a square empty space edged with fifty holes you will never need, but you have finished. Clean the chair. Wait for it to dry. Paint it. Finish painting it. Lie on the floor, with your head between the wet paint on the chair and the wet paint on the newspaper, and peer up at the under surfaces of the bars. Retrieve the brush from the jar, lever the lid off the paint with a screwdriver and go on painting. Do not rub painty hair with painty hand.

Two days later walk round the hanging cupboard on which you have used the first half of the third tin of sea-green paint. Walk carefully.

Tell yourself that the scruffiness of the room is due to its mess. Tell yourself, also, that there is something else wrong. Sort of fold your arms horizontally across your nose and realize that you were right all the time and the dado thing round the wall should be grey like the rest of the wall, not white like the door. Remember the half-tin of grey wall-paint. Look at the clock. Forget the grey paint.

Thirty-six hours later, rub your thumb twelve hours too soon down a corner of the hanging cupboard. Note, in the morning sunlight, a quantity of thin patches. Repaint them. Note the pallor of the new paint. Trust in Providence. Reflect in general on the transformation wrought by sea-green high gloss paint. Steer the new three-quarter tin of grey wall paint, with its attached wad of newspapers, to the dado. Remember how you felt last night when you finished the first coat, and consider how a new day brings a new approach to paint. Consider, too, how when the approach wears off you still go on painting. Attack last wall with passive loathing, reach last corner in end-of-term triumph. Tell yourself that NOW YOU HAVE FINISHED THE ROOM.

Except for the little oak chest of drawers.

Walk towards it. Notice how geared-up you feel again, how ready to start a new job. Reach for the quarter-tin of sea-green paint.

Stop and think. Observe that, string or not, there are the remains of sixteen drop-handles on this little oak chest. That means unscrewing thirty-two little rusty things before you even start painting.

Try unscrewing just one of these thirty-two little rusty things.

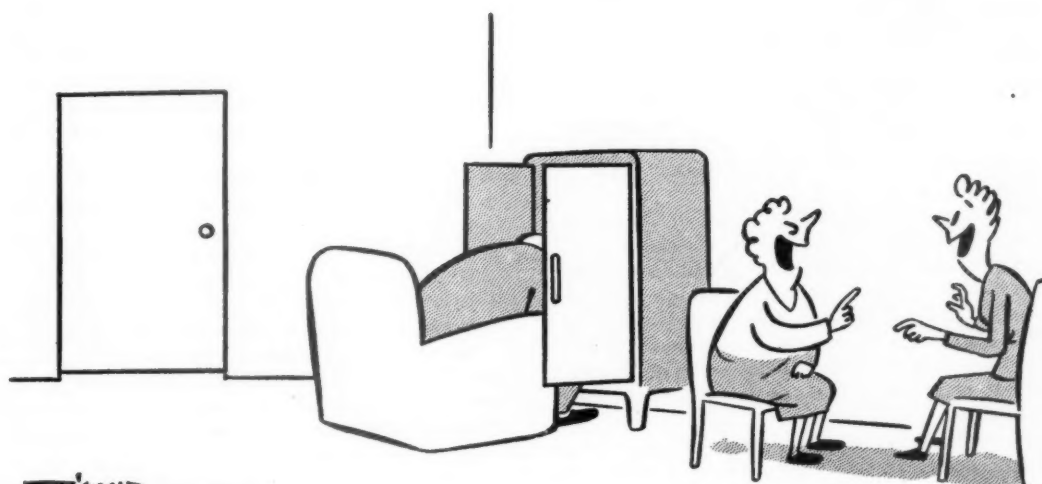
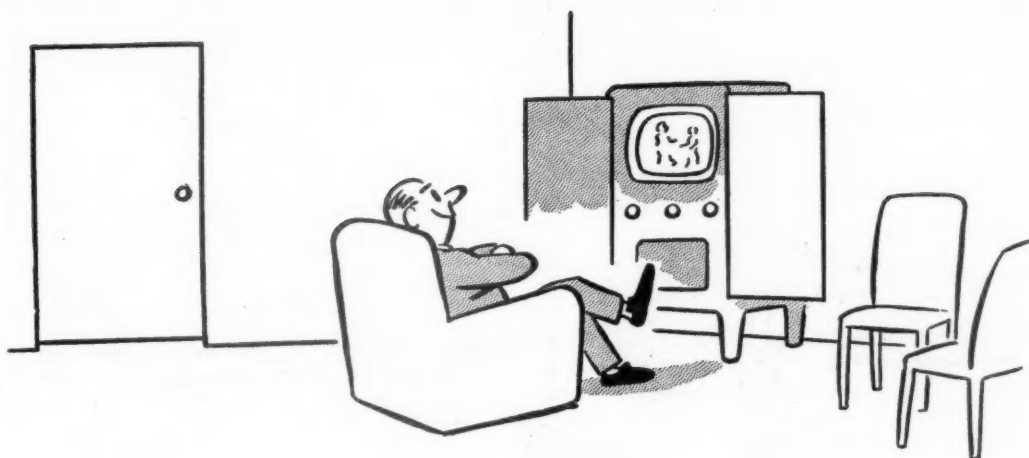
Push the tin of paint away.

Ignore almost the whole of this article. Go back to near the beginning and take a small oak chest of drawers with half the varnish off the top and a gash down one side, and carry on for yourself. The result will at least be clean, with sixteen handles made of fine new string.

ANDE



"Now look—if we don't stop Rest Period at once there won't be time for Free Activity."



DAVID
LONDON



"Stop pushing at the back!—Pass it on."

PRIVATE ZOO

An H. J. Dramatic Fragment

LORD PAWSTER. Of course, I have not started this very long, only since I went off Amateur Conjuring last year because the agency was sending such third-rate audiences.

MRS. FILLARY. What is this concrete tree intended for?

LORD PAWSTER. Squirrels, when we can persuade some to come in out of the park. That is the trouble with wild animals: they distract attention from the captive ones.

LADY HEDGE. This ruined chapel labelled "Tapirs and the Like," what can be the explanation of it?

LORD PAWSTER. The fifth Baron liked having ruins about the grounds, something to do with the Gothic Revival, my old nurse used to say. As this one was in the middle of the area scheduled for the Zoo it seemed a pity not to use it. The high pews make excellent cages. Good morning, Ungulata.

KEEPER OF UNGULATA. All present and correct, my lord. Jenny from Sumatra reported sick. On consulting the Manual under Rhinoceroses, Diseases of, I identified the complaint as hiccoughs. Read-

ing further that treatment comprised frightening the patient, I detonated a squib from the first-aid kit in the proximity of the casualty. First results are not unsatisfactory. Will that be all, sir?

LORD PAWSTER. What is that small black thing that came in the weekly order? I couldn't spot it on the invoice.

KEEPER OF UNGULATA. Well, sir, seeing that it did not have hooves I took it that you would not be wishing me to assume responsibility for it. Keeper Jenkins felt that as it left its chop it would not be a Carnivore and Keeper Haw-Thorn was bitten by it and nothing would make Keeper Haw-Thorn agree it came under Edentata. So we left it for Keeper Catchway when he gets back from leave.

LORD PAWSTER. But it hadn't any wings.

KEEPER OF UNGULATA. Keeper Catchway in addition to Aves also covers Miscellaneous until the staff is up to full establishment, sir.

LADY HEDGE. What a lot of tortoises! I see the paddock is labelled "Tortoises and Passeriformes"; but I can see only tortoises.

LORD PAWSTER. It was two lots thrown into one at an auction. I did not realize that Passeriformes were birds and as soon as we tipped them out of the cases they migrated.

MAJOR CAPE. What on earth is this?

LORD PAWSTER. There is an underground chamber there. My grandfather had it made for photography. He never trusted a dark-room above ground. It is very roomy, so I put a giraffe down there and bored a hole through the roof for its head. We have to use dwarf trees, of course. Aha!

MAJOR CAPE. Such a sluggish-looking elephant would not make me personally beam with pride.

LORD PAWSTER. One always feels a certain softness towards one's first elephant. I had not quite got over Magic when I bought Mignonne and I worked her into "The Mysterious Samovar." Aren't you going to feed her?

MRS. FILLARY. I still have the savoury in my reticule.

LADY HEDGE. And I have the *vol-au-vent*.

MAJOR CAPE. Knowing your cellar I brought an empty flask. Mignonne, *allons voir si le vin rosé* . . .

MAHOUT. I tink ve zay thank-you an' 'ave zome nice greenery. Our tum-tum he is not what he was.

LORD PAWSTER. Cary Khan, make Mignonne kneel for the visitors.

MAHOUT. Not on ze gravel wizout ze mat.

LORD PAWSTER. Well, get the mat. No, I've had an idea. Indent for hassocks.

MAHOUT. I zink ve go a small walky.

MRS. FILLARY. What is in the tent?

LORD PAWSTER. Refreshments, just like a real menagerie.

MRS. FILLARY. I hurriedly withdraw the inquiry. What about snakes?

LORD PAWSTER. We had six, but they got into the pipes and there they still are, all except a very thin rattlesnake; that reached a waste-pipe during the night. The bath amplified its rattle until a burglar no one knew was there gave himself up before the hunt reached him. Whoa, there!

GARDENER (*en passant*). Well, it was your idea to harness a llama to the mower.

MAJOR CAPE. I am prepared to take an interest in this curious pile of rocks on the strict understanding that it marks the completion of the tour.

LORD PAWSTER. I got a real landscape gardener to design it. It's a hundred feet high and two hundred feet round at the base. The rock is Purbeck marble. It comes, the Geological Museum told me over the phone, from Dorsetshire. Those trees growing out of crevices are fig-trees. The ones tied on with wire are magnolias.

LADY HEDGE. Of what creature is it the temporary habitat?

LORD PAWSTER. Most of the animals we have tried on it so far have fallen off. Our only real success has been the sloth. As a matter of fact that's wired on too. (*A horrid noise is heard.*) Ah, feeding time.

MRS. FILLARY. I suppose they have just eaten the food.

FINIS.

R. G. G. PRICE

BLACKBERRYING

THERE's the sharp rotting-smell, and the blue leaf-smoke lingers;

The sun shines thickly, as if through a cobwebbed pane.

Behold me, then, with my vintage-purpled fingers
Blackberrying in the lane.

I am wearing my shocking old coat—I'm *allowed* to wear it;

There's comfort, too, in this rubbed and stumpy stick
And even a douce nostalgia—I swear it—
In the remembered prick.

The basket is just as light, and its paper lining
As slow to be covered, the blackberries just as high
Where the briar and woodbine twine, and as wetly
shining,
As in the years gone by.

As in the years gone by—the same guilty pleasure
In taking sporadic toll of the common crop,
In thought slowed down to the job's unhurried measure
Or its more frequent stop.

The Spring, I am thinking, has lost the keen edge of
its hunger,

And Winter is not as white, nor the Summer as gold;
But blackberrying is the same as when I was younger—
And Autumn does not grow old.

JUSTIN RICHARDSON



"Strip, fill, make good, one coat primer, two coats varnish."



TO MARY, RISING FIVE

MARY, Mary, what do you see
Gazing at life with such wide, wide eyes
Aglow with wonder, dancing with glee?
A mint-bright world beneath paint-fresh skies . . .
Not the worn back-drop it appears to me,
Foil for mere puppets to posturize . . .
Eden's the landscape your eyes see!

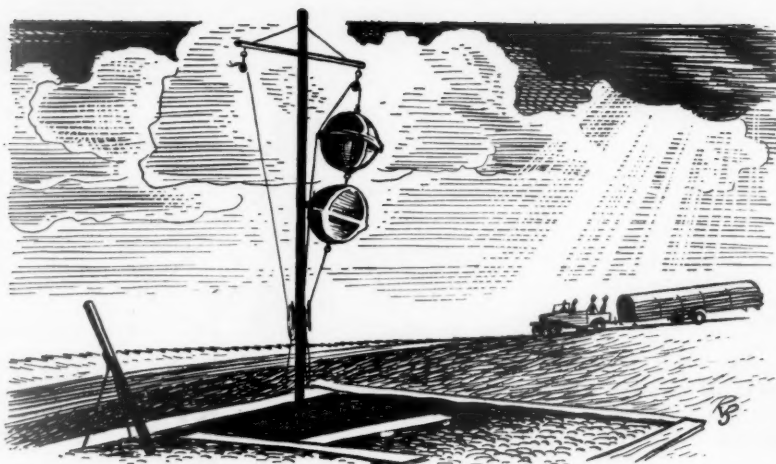
Mary, Mary, what do you hear
When in your play you pause and listen?
Fairies whispering in your ear
Secrets that cause your eyes to glisten?
An angel, maybe, carolling clear,
On his way from heaven some babe to christen?
Adult ears are too deaf to hear!

Mary, Mary, what do you know,
What is the clue to your happy heart?
Dreams of childhood, the flowers that grow
In a magical mind-land (far apart
From the grown-up world of worry and woe)
The way to which is hid in a chart
None but a child may read and know.

Mary, O Mary, rising five,
Though skies cloud over and winds blow wild,
Fair friends prove false and the devil drive,
May you still own the eyes of a child,
Ears to celestial sounds alive,
A heart of innocence undefiled,
When you are rising sixty-five!







SOARING SPIRITS : GLIDING AT REDHILL

THERE is more hot air talked in gliding circles than in any other congregation of sportsmen in the whole world. These may sound harsh words, but in fact I write them without the slightest risk of offence. Hot air rises, and with it, on the right days, do gliders. You may remember that if you take a bunsen and a flask of—

But excuse me a moment. They are strapping me in, and seldom have I welcomed an attention more. I am sitting, as it were, in the bows of a small canoe, and quite a lot of me is bulging over the side. This canoe is the social section of a Slingsby Trainer. Half a mile away down the level airfield is an ex-R.A.F. balloon winch, ready to rush us up into the sky. Our end of the cable ($\frac{3}{16}$ in. steel) has just arrived in a motor-car, and is being hooked on to a ring in

our nose, as if we were a fractious bull. Sitting beside me, the Chief Flying Instructor makes a few last-minute adjustments to his cap, and these are reported by telephone to the winch, which is gradually taking up slack. "O.K.," says the C.F.I., casually, and—dear me! You have seen a boy running into the wind, with his kite mounting steeply behind him? That is what is now happening to us, only *we are in the kite!* The acceleration appears tremendous, but after we have bumped a very short way we are airborne, and suddenly our movement is exquisitely smooth. Although it's by no means the abdominal operation I had feared, I will admit it's a trifle disconcerting to see the ground shrink as though punctured. At first the nose of our glider is right above us, but as we near the winch we

flatten out, and then the pilot yanks a yellow knob. There is a clank as the cable breaks free, to float down on its parachute, and the next moment we are wheeling in the empyrean, like any old buzzard. This is a most marvellous sensation. All the weight seems to have gone out of us. We and our glider are the same creature. It is so utterly peaceful up here that we might be sitting in a dual-control bath-chair on the top of Beachy Head. We have a ringside view, of the North Downs running straight to Guildford in the sun, of all the lovely patchwork of field and wood rolling, an untidy counterpane, towards Leith Hill.

"No lift to-day," says the C.F.I. "The odd thermal may trigger off later, but I doubt it."

In three or four minutes we have swung in a great arc and are coming in to land. When the nose goes down there is the same friendly whistling, in the stays and airbrakes, that you get in a dinghy running into the wind. Indeed, the whole business is strongly reminiscent of sailing, and not least the nice people concerned.

The airfield comes up quite slowly. A few faint bumps, the brakes go on, and we tip gently over on to one wing. On the bank beside us, waiting their turn, sits a cluster of enthusiasts, aspirants for the "Silver C" badge, men and women in blue jerseys and rumpled trousers; we might be on a staithe in any small-boat estuary in Norfolk. A row of superbly battered cars behind them makes it clear that gliding is not a sport confined to millionaires.

"It's about the only good thing



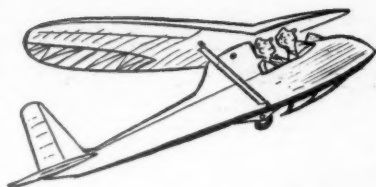
that came out of the Versailles Treaty," remarks an old hand. "The Germans were obliged to develop gliding. These advanced single-seaters of ours, the Olympias, are British-made but based on Jerry designs. This club—the Surrey Gliding Club—and Dunstable are the biggest of the nine major British clubs. We've about a hundred members. Expense? The sub. is six guineas, and you can have an hour's fumble for half a guinea, so you see it's miles cheaper than powered flying, apart from being safer. We keep the costs down by doing every possible repair ourselves. It's more fun, anyway. But a new Olympia is around six hundred, so it's tough going, in spite of the help Lord Kemsley's given the clubs."

"What's a thermal?" I ask him.

"There are three main kinds of lift. A thermal is air rising from a hot place and sucking cooler air in—for instance, a big field with woods round it. A decent thermal takes you up like the elevator in the Empire State Building. Then there's hill-lift, which is simply air being forced against the side of a slope. And there's also a rum thing called a standing wave, that we don't know very much about. It's up and down in shape but stationary in relation to the ground. Very useful for cross-countrys."

"Cross-countrys sound a bit uncertain. Are your gliders equipped with pyjamas?"

"That would be asking for a hoodoo. But if you go up in your shirt-sleeves for a ten-minute fumble before lunch you probably finish in



Yorkshire, as one of our members did this summer. That's one of the exciting things about gliding."

"And the others?"

"Well, I'd say Alpine soaring is undoubtedly one. It's a bit hair-raising at first, the way pine trees and mountains come past, but it's rather terrific. Another's going up in a thunder-cloud. Once you're under the middle of them there's a devil of a lift. Inside the cloud it's frightfully dark and bumpy, and you ice up fairly soon. When you've had enough you whiz out into a sort of Disney fairyland of dazzling icebergs and enormous canyons."

"What happens when you force-land, say in the middle of a Conservative Garden Fête in Nether Wallop?"

"First of all you soothe the natives, though usually they're grand, and

then you ring back here and a retrieving party gets cracking."

An Olympia is going up, scarlet and graceful. "I imagined gliders were just hurled from high places by very strong men," I say.

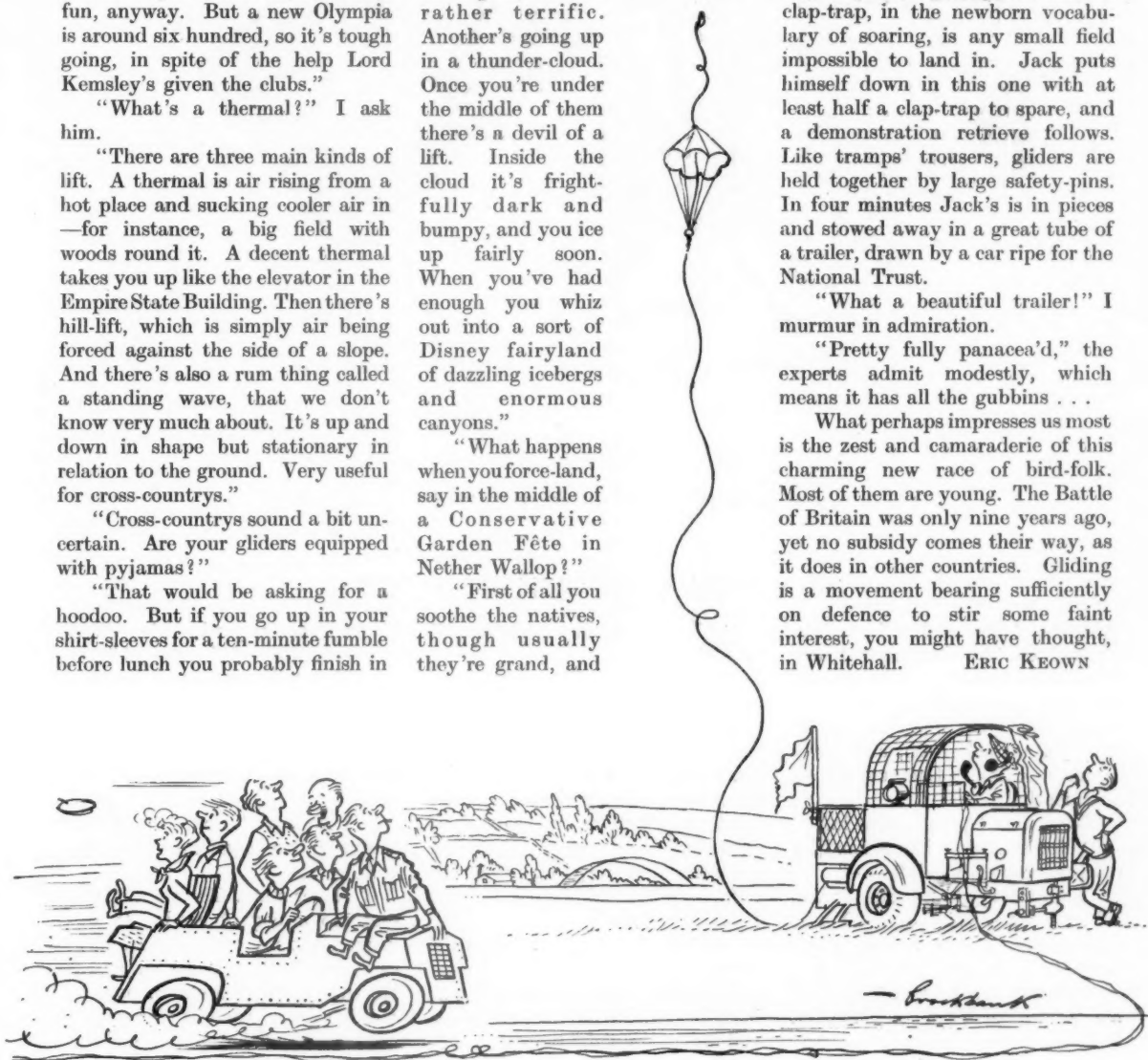
"So they can be, with a rubber rope. We call that a bunge-launch. Sometimes we tow with a fast car and piano wire, and of course there's also a powered tow behind an Auster, but that's more costly."

"Come and see Jack land in a clap-trap!" somebody shouts. A clap-trap, in the newborn vocabulary of soaring, is any small field impossible to land in. Jack puts himself down in this one with at least half a clap-trap to spare, and a demonstration retrieve follows. Like tramps' trousers, gliders are held together by large safety-pins. In four minutes Jack's is in pieces and stowed away in a great tube of a trailer, drawn by a car ripe for the National Trust.

"What a beautiful trailer!" I murmur in admiration.

"Pretty fully panacea'd," the experts admit modestly, which means it has all the gubbins...

What perhaps impresses us most is the zest and camaraderie of this charming new race of bird-folk. Most of them are young. The Battle of Britain was only nine years ago, yet no subsidy comes their way, as it does in other countries. Gliding is a movement bearing sufficiently on defence to stir some faint interest, you might have thought, in Whitehall. ERIC KEOWNS





"Why, how exciting! Here's a picture postcard from Daddy."

TALK WITH A DEPARTMENT STORE

AFTER fourteen *burr-burrs* the girl on the switchboard announces her identity. It is remarkable how much boredom and contempt she gets into the single word. I am still fresh, and I say "Good morning." She cuts me off impatiently.

Next time I plunge right in.

"You sent me a bag of sand," I tell her, "which I didn't—"

I am talking to myself. I wait. When a fresh voice says "Yes?" much later, I am feeling a bit excitable.

"Look here," I begin, "you sent me a bag of sand on Monday. I—"

"I'll put you on to 'Queries.'"

"No, no!"

To be put on to "Queries" is the one thing to be avoided at all costs. "Queries" are the people who inquire into their colleagues' allegations that my wife has no points when I am perfectly certain that she has twenty-four, reporting ten days later that I am perfectly right and regretting that the goods I intended to buy are now out of stock and will I take baked beans?

"Very well, madame," says the voice.

"Don't call me madame," I say, bringing out all the available masculinity of my light tenor.

"I beg your pardon, sir. What was the nature of the query?"

"If I tell you, can I be sure you'll listen?"

A pause. There is no guidance in the department store's book of staff rules about remarks of this kind.

"I'm sorry," says the voice, trapped into a vulgarism—"I didn't quite catch?"

"Never mind. The point is, you sent me a bag of sand. It was delivered to my office and I had to carry it all the way to Haywards Heath. It weighed eleven pounds. I didn't know what it was until I got home, and the—hallo! hallo!"

"Garden Furniture," says a young man with adenoids.

"Who?"

"Who is speaking, please?"

"Who is that?"

"Garden Furniture. Who is speaking, please?"

"Was I speaking to you just now about sand?"

"For a swing, was it?"

"For a what?"

"Was it," says the young man dully, "a stand for a swing?"

"I don't know what you're talking about. You sent me a—"

"Is that Mrs. Whisk-Fooley?"

"Listen," I say in a vibrant baritone. "On Monday I received an eleven-pound bag of sand, done up in enough packing to protect a Ming vase. When I—"

I sense a certain detachment. My voice is merely entering the instrument and piling up behind the dial.

Presently a small charge of dynamite explodes in my ear.

"Inquiries?" says a frigid voice. I can see its owner studying her outstretched finger-nails critically. Plainly I had better be as brief as possible.

"I have some sand," I announce. "Can you tell me where—?"

There is a loud click. Several loud clicks. A girl's voice talking rapidly and plaintively says "Do I know 'im? I says. Know Charlie? I says. Why, 'is name's legion, I says! Charlie's nothing but a—"

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!"

"All right, mate, keep your shirt on," says a man's voice hoarsely. "Are you the chap with the sand?"

I admit it. This is no time to stand on one's dignity.

"Bring it round the back, Wednesday."

"Round the—? I shall do nothing of the kind!"

"'Ere, 'oo do you think you're talking to, eh? Round the back, Wednesday, I said. Tip it in the corner of the dispatch-yard, and don't slide 'alf a ton of it over the coke, same as you done last time!"

I sense that I am within half a second of being cut off. All will be to do again.

"Please, please!" It is a *cri de*

cœur. "Don't cut me off. There's some mistake. I've only got eleven pounds of sand. I only want—"

"Eleven pounds—? Strike me with a—! 'Ere, aren't you East Surrey Sand and Gravel?"

"No, I'm not. I'm a registered customer with a bag of sand. It was—"

A click. The sound of obscure scrapings, clickings, shimmerings, vibrations. I put a hand up to my telephone ear to make sure that it has not been forced into my head. Then:

"Can I help you?" It is a woman's voice—warm, smiling, intimate, the voice of a television announcer.

"I wish you would," I say with deep sincerity. "I've been on the phone for twelve minutes, and nobody's helped me yet."

"Oh, you poor dear!" she says, as if touched to genuine compassion. Then, with a tiny chuckle: "Perhaps you'd better tell me *everything*." I feel I could.

"You won't go away and leave me?" I say anxiously. "Please say you won't go away?"

"I won't." She laughs deliciously. "Now then, what's the matter?"

"Well." I am breathing deeply from sheer relief. "There seems to have been some upset about a bottle of sandwich-spread I ordered last week."

"Sandwich-spread." She makes the word sound beautiful. "I see. Yes?"

"I think the young gentleman

on telephone orders must have been interrupted, because he wrote on the invoice 'One sand,' do you see? And of course they sent it—an eleven-pound bag of sand."

"Which of course you didn't want."

"Which of course I didn't want."

We both laugh. It is delightful.

"I am so sorry," she says.

"It doesn't matter a bit. The only thing is, I carried it all the way home to Haywards Heath before I found out what it was. And, honestly, I don't particularly want to carry it all the way back again."

"I should think not, indeed," she says, indignant for me.

"It only cost one-and-six, but—"

"One-and-six is one-and-six these days," she says gravely.

"It is, really. The thing is, I wonder if you could arrange to have it collected? I mean, if I post it—"

"You mustn't dream of it," she says sternly. "I think I know just what to do."

"Wonderful! What?"

She chuckles. She is adorable.

"I won't keep you one moment, madame. I'm just putting you on to 'Queries' . . ."

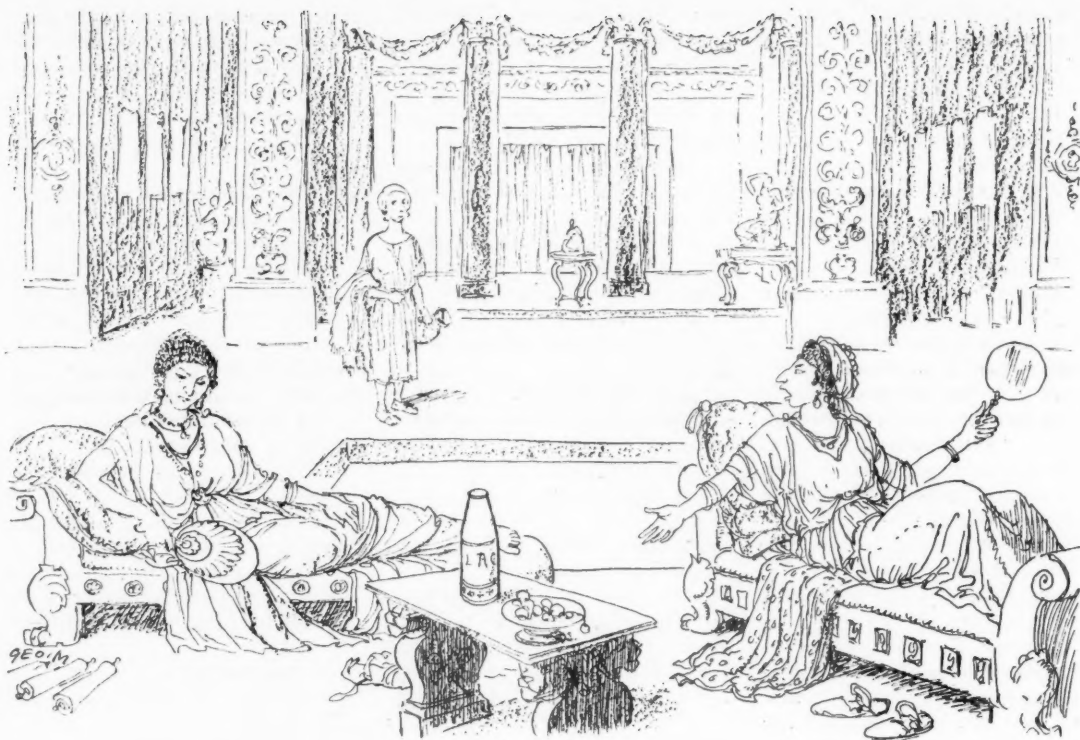
J. B. BOOTHROYD

2 2

J.P.s' Charter

"In view of your past good record we will take a lenient view of this," said the chairman, announcing that the summons would be dismissed under the Criminal Justice Act.—*Local paper*





"Only two and a half pints! It doesn't run to a bath a month."

ONE MAN'S MEETINGS . . .

I LIKED Bullfish from the first. His large car and his decisive way of ordering drinks appealed to me at once. I very soon decided that he would be invaluable to us. After I'd met him four or five times I ventured to broach the subject. He wasn't very keen.

"Doesn't sound quite in my line, old boy. Not that I'm against progress and all that—quite the contrary. But I've always stuck to my own business and never gone in for public affairs."

I persevered. I was patient and very gentle. I didn't want to scare him. After a few weeks he came round and agreed to let me nominate him for our Advisory Panel. I had made a start. It remained to be seen what he would make of the opportunity.

I didn't see him for some weeks, but when I did bump into him I asked how he was getting on with it.

"It's a bit strange," he said. "I'm rather out of my depth. I've been to a couple of meetings, but I can't say I'm very clear about whom we're advising or what we're advising them about."

"Don't you worry," I reassured him; "you'll get the hang of it all in time. Don't rush things."

"But they're a very nice crowd of folk and they're certainly keen. I admire them. As a matter of fact, I've made a little donation." He looked rather pleased as he went on. "They've put me on a sub-committee—something about procedure, I think."

I was well satisfied. Bullfish was shaping nicely.

A couple of months later he told me the Advisory Panel had put him up as a delegate for the Annual Conference. He seemed flattered but rather puzzled.

"I didn't realize there was an

Annual Conference as well as the Advisory Panel. Don't you have rather a lot of meetings?"

I explained as simply as I could. "There has to be a Conference to get the sense of the country. That helps the Executive to formulate a policy for consideration by the Advisory Panel before it goes up to the General Council. You're only on the fringe of it all yet. Don't worry; you'll see how it all fits together as times goes on."

"I see . . ." He didn't sound convinced, but ordered some more drinks in that decisive way of his.

"And will the Conference be like the Panel?"

"Not in the least," I explained; "it will be bigger and noisier."

Bullfish didn't see that it could be much bigger or noisier.

"There's another thing," I added, "Conferences always happen at the seaside."

I wasn't at the Conference myself, as I'm on the International Secretariat now and was in Basle at the time, but I heard it was a great success. The first session was given over to a report and discussion on last year's Conference and the other session to debating the agenda for next year's Conference. I was glad to see from the report that Bullfish had been elected to the General Council.

"Congratulations on getting on the Council." I shook hands warmly next time we met. "You're moving fast. It took me years to get that far. You'll be joining us on the Executive before long."

"Yes, it was very nice of them. I don't know why they did it. I didn't even speak at the Conference. Between ourselves, I didn't follow much of it, especially all that about Standing Orders and the fraternal greetings from that chap from Pakistan." He smiled and went on: "But everyone was very friendly. I gave a little dinner party at the Majestic. Most of the Executive came along with twenty or thirty of the Council."

The General Council doesn't meet very often—just two or three times a year, chiefly to ratify what the Executive has been doing. Months later, after his first meeting, Bullfish rang me up.

"I say, I went along to the General Council the other night. We had the reports from you fellows on the Executive. A very good meeting; we got through a lot of stuff." I detected a note of pride in his voice; he was really one of us now.

"A nice crowd, aren't they? I hope you get along well with them."

"Oh, yes, very nice people. Some of them came along to my club for supper afterwards. But there's one thing that worries me. They've asked me to serve on the Advisory Panel to represent the Council. Is it all right? You know I'm already . . ."

"Don't worry about that." I sounded very reassuring. "That's liaison. Good liaison is essential in these big organizations; it keeps everybody in the picture."

Six weeks later I heard Bullfish had resigned from the Council, the

Panel, everything. I was disappointed, for I thought I'd found the very man we needed and that he was settling down to it very well. I was a bit brusque with him when I got the chance to speak about it.

"I'm disappointed with you, Bullfish. I hear you've let us down." I spoke sharply as I accepted the drink he had ordered in his usual decisive way.

"I'm sorry"; he sounded very humble and rather pathetic. "There's no ill-feeling, I hope? I know it was grand work, but it began to get me down. You may be used to it, I'm not. I was like a fish out of water. I was losing my grip. I couldn't sleep at nights and kept going back to see if I'd shut doors. I saw a psychiatrist, and he told me not to strain my thought patterns. So I've turned it all in. I'm very sorry about it all, but I'd

better stick to my own business—something I can understand."

It struck me that I knew nothing of Bullfish's business, except that it was obviously successful.

"And what is your business?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing much—just a little family affair. I've got five or six factories in the North. Then there's the retail side and the overseas agencies. I've also got my own mines in Rhodesia; that makes it so much easier for raw materials. I do a little contract work now and then too, but I've nothing much on hand just now except for a little hydro-electric job in Baluchistan and an electrification scheme in Patagonia—all straightforward stuff."

I left him, but as I boarded the tram on my way to our Public Relations Sub-Committee I couldn't help thinking . . .



THE INACCURACY OF ARTISTS

ARTISTS are not mechanically precise—the history of art provides only one famous exception to the rule—that perfect circle, drawn freehand, which Giotto sent to Pope Benedict XI as a sample of his skill.

It was a witty and effective gesture on the part of the great Florentine. All the same it is a little surprising that the Pope “and many courtiers versed in the arts,” according to Vasari, “recognized by this how much Giotto surpassed in excellence all the other painters of his time.” Being perfect, the circle was necessarily identical with a circle drawn by a pair of compasses. It revealed, therefore, no quality personal to Giotto except a degree of skill which any technical draughtsman could probably attain with practice.

What is more remarkable is the fact that artists can be convincing and even truthful without being at all accurate in the ordinary sense of the word. This was beautifully demonstrated by the comparison made between the old sporting prints of racecourse and hunting field and the first instantaneous photographs to be taken of a galloping horse. No horse, the camera made plain, could stretch out its fore and hind legs like the hunters and Epsom runners which Henry Alken and James Pollard drew. They were impossible animals. The unerring lens proved Alken and Pollard to be wrong.

Yet . . . there was one puzzling thing. The running horse in the photograph did not seem to be moving except in a very lethargic way. On the other hand, the impossible horses of Alken and Pollard were skimming along at an apparently tremendous speed. The conclusion was inescapable. The formula for representing swift motion was not the same as the formula for representing the position of a horse's legs correctly at a given moment. The appearance of swift motion, however, was essential to the truth of the scene. Therefore the artist discarded accuracy of a particular kind to express a truth. His fiction was more truthful than truth itself.



Is there not a case for exact record, for faithfully measured proportions? No doubt there is when some strictly utilitarian purpose is to be served. But the artist as such is concerned with more emotional values. Turner, for instance, was a man of hawk-like eye and highly cultivated powers of observation, but in his views of actual places he rarely chose to be accurate. The scenery needed a certain shifting to suit him; a hill must be moved, a church tower heightened for the sake of the composition. Inaccuracy, in the sense of a disregard for fact, shades off into the imaginative faculty. That magnificently imaginative artist the late James Pryde (whose memorial exhibition is now at the Tate Gallery) constantly painted architectural subjects, but he used to say that a faithful picture of an actual building only reflected credit on the architect. He never portrayed his native Edinburgh or the old London of which he was so fond, but his

pictures, exaggerated and unreal, somehow had the essence of the city in them.

“But surely,” it may be objected, “the masters of figure-drawing were accurate”—perhaps with the added rider, “not like these modern chaps who draw women with dislocated collar-bones.” Well, there is many a beautiful drawing by a great master which is as far from normal in proportion as the gigantically-muscled sibyls of Michelangelo. Their grandeur lies in an exaggeration. There are some master drawings where a single figure is outlined by half a dozen lines—a whole series of approximations. The pleasure to be derived from such a drawing consists in following a process of thought—in watching the master hand tentatively indicate several possible solutions—in the vigour with which, after a number of exquisite errors left in plain view, it seizes and models some one part with determined and trenchant strokes. “To banish imperfection,” as Ruskin so acutely remarked, “is to destroy expression.”

W. GAUNT

THE BATHS OF FRANCE

O BATHS of France, O baths of France,
’Tis not to praise you that I sing;
Rather, to ask by what mischance
Are all your plugs tied up with string;
Rather to ask what strange mishaps
Eternally assail your taps.

On with the *Chaud*! It marches not.
But vidaged waters rise again:
The sportive *froid* turns fiercely hot,
And every pull destroys a chain:
And every stream deserts its post
Just at the hour when needed most!

From Vintimille to Cap Gris-Nez
Is heard the music of their plight
Unwashed taps that drip by day
Convulsive pipes that roar by night.
“Send us,” they cry, “O send us some
French plumber who can really plumb!”

How gladly would I leave behind
This model gaol our rulers plan
For skies more warm, for hearts more kind,
For Europe and the Rights of man!
One thought alone my flight restrains—
The Frenchman's bath, the Frenchman's drains.

AT THE PLAY

The Seagull (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)—*Variety* (COLLINS)

FRAGILE—Handle With Care! applies more to CHEHOV than probably any other dramatist, because his work is a mosaic of separate pieces, each with a distinct and perfectly balanced value of its

permits the play to forge as sanely and purposefully ahead as any well-made drama taken from the French. This puts a premium on action at the expense of thought, and makes the little bubbles of truth rising out

there survives one corner proudly impervious to the brazen sedatives of Hollywood. It is now nearly a hundred years since Sam Collins, the Irish chimney-sweep who rocked Evans's Supper Rooms with "The Limerick Races," started the little music-hall that bears his name as well as its ancient title of the Chapel on the Green. The Chairman has departed, the microphone has, alas! arrived, but the old spirit remains in this shabby but beautiful pocket theatre which, Victorian to its last knob, still preserves a live orchestra.

The cream of the programme was ANCELL and his painted pigeons, elegant birds with an Aldershot memory for drill, MANZ and CHICO in a knife-throwing act that blazed up into a surging whirl of lariats, and JIMMY SCOTT, a proper clown of the tumbling, fumbling, heart-rending kind, such as I have not seen in several wasted years.

ERIC KEOWN



[The Seagull]

"How Monotonous People Are!"

Masha—MISS HAZEL TERRY; Nina—MISS MAI ZETTERLING;
Irina—MISS ISABEL JEANS

own. He was a rebel—the rebel—against the convention that stage characters should talk and behave less inexplicably than they would in real life, and his achievement was in finding delicious comedy and overwhelming pathos not so much in what people said to one another as in what they said to themselves. Even at their most sociable his characters are isolated, and although everything they say powerfully affects the emotional undercurrent of the play, much of their speech is divinely irrelevant to the surface action. One of the excitements of watching CHEHOV lies in the necessity to watch all his characters at once, for the noisy crowd quarrelling in the centre of the stage may be only a foil for the unspoken mood of a quiet figure sitting silent in a corner.

It follows therefore that a production of CHEHOV allowed to fall into the normal rhythms loses his special magic, and this is what happens to *The Seagull* at the Lyric, Hammersmith, where Miss IRENE HENTSCHEL, usually so discerning,

of the inner depths seem sometimes genuine irrelevances. She is not, however, very well served by the cast. Miss ISABEL JEANS as *Madame Arkadina* is a hard brilliant out of Maugham. As *Nina* Miss MAI ZETTERLING is severely handicapped in her best scenes by broken English. Nor does Mr. PAUL SCOTFIELD, though refreshingly less mannered than he has been, succeed in showing *Constantine* as much more than a rather ordinary youngman. With *Masha*, sunk deep in snuff and vodka, Miss HAZEL TERRY gets nearer to CHEHOV, Mr. IAN HUNTER's *Trigorin* is also not far off, and in the small part of the wretched schoolmaster Mr. JOHN KIDD gets nearest perhaps of all.

The cinema may celebrate its monstrous victories, but at Islington

Recommended

THE HEIRESS—*Haymarket*—From Henry James' story, very well staged.

BLACK CHIFFON—*Westminster*—Flora Robson superb in good family drama.

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING—*Globe*—Witty comedy by a poet.

THE LATE EDWINA BLACK—*Ambassadors*—Neat psychological thriller.



Variety

Bird Watching

ANCELL'S PAINTED PIGEONS



"Ring up the 'Daily Echo,' dear, and tell them to send a reporter. I've struck a vein of uranium."

MY HAT'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

I NOW mean to remain in Glen Errichdie until I can be sure of a sleeper all the way to Euston: point the finger who will.

It was not so much the journey itself as the man opposite. He was a young man of personable appearance and agreeable manner and used the pleasing speech of Inverness in spite of being, as I discovered, a London policeman. He was going home for a holiday.

Altogether it looked like being a reasonably comfortable night.

At Crewe, however, there entered a man, another man and his wife and child, six suitcases and a dog. The situation had deteriorated, inasmuch as we were now all sitting with our feet on either the floor or the dog. However, we were a good-natured little party and the only perceptible note of irritation was struck by my hat, which I found I needed to keep the top light out of my eyes and which had forced its way under three of the six suitcases.

I cannot sleep sitting up. As soon as I drop off—after a couple of hours or so—my lower jaw tries to do the same and awakens me. If I put my mackintosh over my head it becomes dark and stifling and I am asleep almost at once. But then my head droops and I roll up slowly into a ball on the knees of the man opposite.

This particular man was very nice about it, but, even so, it was a very poor night until the family party alighted at Perth and made room for Morpheus. As we steamed on in the first wan glimmer of a wet dawn I looked with one heavy eye at the policeman. He was asleep and the sight of him somehow made me think of a soldier sleeping in a rainy jungle. Perhaps it was something to do with his dishevelment and his chin, which by now needed a shave, but I could almost fancy that I could hear the croak of a distant bullfrog. I thought how pleased he would have been if he could have

known what I was thinking, and went to sleep.

Some three-fifths of a second later the train stopped at Pitlochry, thirty miles up the line, and I awoke. The night was over. The hills loomed bleakly in the grey drizzle and so did the young policeman. He sat up, opened his eyes reluctantly and regarded me with what seemed like a new interest. The train puffed on laboriously behind its two engines.

"You know," said the policeman, "I've an idea I've seen you before somewhere."

"Have you?" I replied courteously. "Where?"

It seemed to me that if we were to have this kind of reminiscence the evening before would have been a more happily chosen time.

"You remind me," he said, "of a man I knew who was a captain in the Army, in Burma—a Captain Spoonhandle of the Antrim Regiment, One-two-four Column."

The force of the coincidence was not to be denied, and I admitted that I had reminded him of myself. But who was he? Clearly I ought to know and I tried to pretend that there was something about his face but I couldn't quite . . .

"I was Thirteen Platoon," he enlightened me. "Name of Stewart. You remember the time Mr. Chambers and eleven of us, and you, got cut off for two or three days after the Meza crossing?"

I did indeed and was feeling a little sorry, in a turgid kind of way, that there was no time to go into all that now, when the train stopped at Blair Atholl and I got out. We were able before it went on again to exchange a few words at the window and I remarked that it was a pity we had not recognized one another rather earlier in the journey.

"It didn't occur to me till this morning," he said.

The train began to move off along the wet and empty platform and he leaned out for a final word.

"I think," he said chattily, "it was seeing you asleep with that old hat on and needing a shave. With your mouth open."

They tell me sleepers are easier to get than they used to be.

BOOKING OFFICE

Ladies' Day

IF we agree that our period is sadly deficient, and probably totally lacking, in great writers of fiction, at least we can find some comfort in the thought that never have there been so many novelists reaching a high level of competence, professional story-tellers who know within the limits of their talent precisely what they are about. Looking at the laden stalls, not only the reviewer must groan a little to contemplate the army of type-writers busily, and often fruitlessly, at work; but we live in an age of transition, and out of such teeming activity better things should come. In the expanding bracket of near-excellence women novelists, I think, are steadily taking a larger place.

Of these Miss Marguerite Steen is deservedly one of the leaders in the field of the powerful masculine novel that can traffic in blood and sweat, that takes us as compellingly into rough company as into the brittle atmosphere of a dowager's drawing-room. She has a remarkable knowledge of how men of widely different types talk and think, which enables her to gather in a generous slice of life, rich in colour and incident. Old Bristol and the steamy side of Africa suit her well, and *Twilight on the Floods* carries on the saga of the great family of shipowners we met in "The Sun is My Undoing." By the end of the nineteenth century the sting has almost gone out of the Floods, whose ships have floated them securely among the landowners, but there survives young Johnny, born with the sea in his veins and a craving for Africa. The story alternates between Bristol and the Gold Coast, and woven vividly into it is a multitude of characters. Its core, however, is Johnny's expiation of the Floods' ancient guilt as slavers, for which he finally dies in the Ashanti Rising. The picture of a moneyed family sapped by its social climb is admirable, and the dark drama of Johnny's end in an occult and vengeful jungle is grimly told indeed. This is a strong, well-knit book that never gets out of hand and that must be the result of infinitely patient research. Only occasionally does Miss Steen slip up. In 1900, surely, nothing was "smashing," nor did people "take a poor view" of anything, and certainly nobody in those halcyon days was ever asked to "take it."

Little Boy Lost, by Miss Marghanita Laski, is claimed by its publishers, rather foolishly, I feel, to be the most moving novel to appear for years, perhaps since Dickens. It is far short of that, but its brief account of a warped English father reluctantly searching for his small son, lost during the occupation of France, and finding unexpected happiness in his discovery, is something of an achievement in perceptive and unsentimental writing. What might easily have been intolerable becomes true and affecting, and the description of a drab French town in winter is chilling observation. Where Miss Laski fails is in the character of the father, who, though supposed to be a poet, is a desiccated prig, turning human beings into sociological deductions and condemning Winnie-the-Pooh on æsthetic grounds. When he is asked what a girl is like,

he replies owlishly that she reads the *New Statesman* every week and takes an informed interest in politics; and, unfortunately, we are left in doubt whether that appears as funny to Miss Laski as it does to us.

I am afraid I found Miss Naomi Royde-Smith's *The Iniquity of Us All* vaguely pretentious, though much better written than its content deserves. It is about an English youth who becomes embroiled in a Nazi intrigue before the war and, rushing home hysterically in an attempt to save a friend from the Gestapo, is stricken in his conscience at having accidentally involved an innocent German. To me he remains an intangible character. Miss Royde-Smith is deeply conscious of the larger issues behind the German problem, but her novel is full of oblique and mysterious implications which seem to boil down to very little.

And lastly, since it is a collection of short stories, comes *Tea with Mr. Rochester*, by Miss Frances Towers, whose death a year ago clearly robbed us of a very considerable artist. She wrote delicately, using beautifully sensitive English to explore the inner corners of her characters' minds—what a lesson is here for the psychological mountebanks!—and she had a charming wit that constantly trips one unawares. These stories are repetitive in theme, being often about shy, poetic Cinderellas, but some of them are very good.

ERIC KEOWN

Delicatessen

Joseph Wechsberg in *Sweet and Sour* describes among much else his curious experiences as a Czech law student, a ship's violinist, a substitute member of the Monte Carlo Opera House Orchestra and a member of the American forces in Prague. The collection of autobiographical sketches and stories is as perfectly done as its predecessor, "Looking for a Bluebird." Only the kind of snobbery that appreciates the



"Ruinatation! Filters—filters—filters—filters."

Literature of Entertainment in the past but only the Literature of Enlightenment in the present will refuse to recognize that Mr. Wechsberg is a little Master. However, if you are not satisfied with a book that is well-written and funny, you may be impressed by the skilfully blended sidelights it throws on the deracinated Central European of the inter-war period and on the magnetism of the United States, where Mr. Wechsberg became naturalized and made his name as a contributor to the *New Yorker*, in which several of these pieces first appeared.

R. G. G. P.

A Maugham Miscellany

Connoisseurs of the notebook—a distinct and recognizable group, on whose shelves Samuel Butler, Arnold Bennett, Emerson, Scott Fitzgerald and Chehov stand in odd juxtaposition—have been looking forward for years to the publication of Mr. Somerset Maugham's; but *A Writer's Notebook* proves to be of much more appeal to general readers than the true, the severe amateur of notebooks could wish. What delights such a specialist is the incomplete, the hasty fragment whose stimulus to the mind is the stronger for its brevity. There are such notes here, but most of the book is careful writing: detailed description of people and places, polished expression of ideas—always interesting and characteristic, and for most readers completely satisfying, but a trifle too explicit and considered for the perfect pleasure of that specialist. Luckily most readers take no such limited view, and for them this volume of gleanings from a lifetime's acute, ironic observation will be a long-enduring intellectual treat.

R. M.

Foreground for Mr. Newman

The manner of *Focus*, which is an American reporter's, attributes to the common man an almost incredible sensitivity. The theme, which is the

history of middle-aged Mr. Newman, a suspected Jew, and young Mr. Finkelstein, an undoubted one, omits to include any historical or other explanation for the conduct of "the Christian Front" in Mr. Newman's home town. The "Front" is a sort of Ku Klux Klan. You overturn your Jew's garbage-can. You squeeze him out of business. Mr. Newman, after a quarter of a century of engaging non-Semitic personnel for a firm with a hundred sky-scraper, falls under suspicion himself; marries a Jewess he has turned down; and, for their mutual security, joins the Jew-baiters. It is only fair to say that the wolf-and-lamb simplicity of Mr. Arthur Miller's handling of his cast is offset by more subtle and memorable asides on political climates in general.

H. P. E.

London's Birds

To the heedless of London there are but three birds therein: the sparrow, the pigeon, and the gull. Mr. Fitter, in an enchantingly discursive study of *London's Birds*, almost convinces you that the Golden Eagle has an eyrie in Earl's Court, and Fire-crested Wrens thread the gardens of Finsbury with flying gold. In fact the wealth of bird life in London, as Mr. Fitter reveals with casual ornithological omniscience, is astounding—for the reason that man-made London is but what Cobbett called it, a great wen; and nature, in the Thames valley, has if anything been assisted by man in adapting marsh, river, hill, valley and the terrain to offer facilities to the birds for feeding, breeding, and shelter. To all city-dwellers this book must suggest a new outlook on what so many regard as a wilderness of bricks, mortar, and humanity. To the serious ornithologist there is little new in the survey; but the survey is complete.

R. C. S.

Books Reviewed Above

- Twilight on the Floods.* Marguerite Steen. (Collins, 12/6)
Little Boy Lost. Marghanita Laski. (Cresset Press, 9/6)
The Iniquity of Us All. Naomi Royde-Smith. (Sampson Low, 8/6)
Tea with Mr. Rochester. Frances Towers. (Michael Joseph, 7/6)
Sweet and Sour. Joseph Wechsberg. (Michael Joseph, 10/6)
A Writer's Notebook. W. Somerset Maugham. (Heinemann, 12/6)
Focus. Arthur Miller. (Gollancz, 8/6)
London's Birds. R. S. R. Fitter. (Collins, 10/6)

Other Recommended Books

- Question-Mark.* Donald McCullough. (Paul Elek, 7/6)
 Brisk, light but pithy account of a journey round the world last year. "Some of it—including over thirty illustrations by "Fougasse"—appeared in *Punch*.
Seven Days in New Crete. Robert Graves. (Cassell, 9/6)
 Satirical story of the far future as seen by a present-day poet magically evoked (the social order by then is built on magic, not science). Lively, learned, highly readable; great imaginative power used with great ingenuity.
The Parliament Book. Guy Eden. (Staples Press, 7/6)
 A guide to the Palace of Westminster, but much more; packed with information about history and procedure, entertainingly presented. Photographs and a Parliamentary Glossary.
The Making and Meaning of Words. G. H. Vallins. (Black, 8/6)
 Meaty but wholly enjoyable introduction to the living language, with more delightful snares in the Fowler tradition.



PURPOSE OF VISIT

THIS summer, a man asked for a visa to Transphuphia. The Transphuphian Consulate in London were most willing to help. They took ten and sixpence off him, made him furnish them with photographs of himself in full face and profile, rang up his banker, and gave him a form to fill in six times over.

The man filled in the form carefully and neatly, making use of his diary, some old letters, and a mirror. He told them his mother's nationality at birth, the name of his old school, his religious beliefs, the colour of his eyes, and the length of the scar which he had got in falling off his bicycle as a child.

The Transphuphian officials studied this form, summoned him to an interview, and made him wait two hours. Then one of them began the interview by saying, "All this is quite satisfactory. But there is one question you have left blank. It's this one, called Purpose of Visit."

The man blushed and fidgeted with his feet. "I know," he said. "I didn't know what to put."

"But you must know the purpose of your visit."

"That's just it," the man said. "I don't."

"Perhaps you don't understand the terminology. What we are asking is, why do you want to go to Transphuphia?"

"Honestly, I don't know. I mean, one doesn't always know why one does things, does one? I have two weeks off in August, you see, and I just thought one morning, while I was shaving, actually: how about going to Transphuphia?"

"But why?"

"Well, you have to go somewhere, and most places are full up in August."

"I could interpret that remark as hostile to the national dignity of Transphuphia," said the official, "but I'll let it pass. Just wait here, please."

He left the room, and some minutes later an older official came in.

"I'm sure we can straighten out this little difficulty," he began. "I

gather that you don't wish to visit our country for any official or business reason. If I were you, I should put in that space simply 'Tourist.'"

"Oh, no," said the man. "That wouldn't be true. I hate tourism, always have done."

"What do you want to do in Transphuphia?"

"Oh, go there, and then see. Have a look round, perhaps."

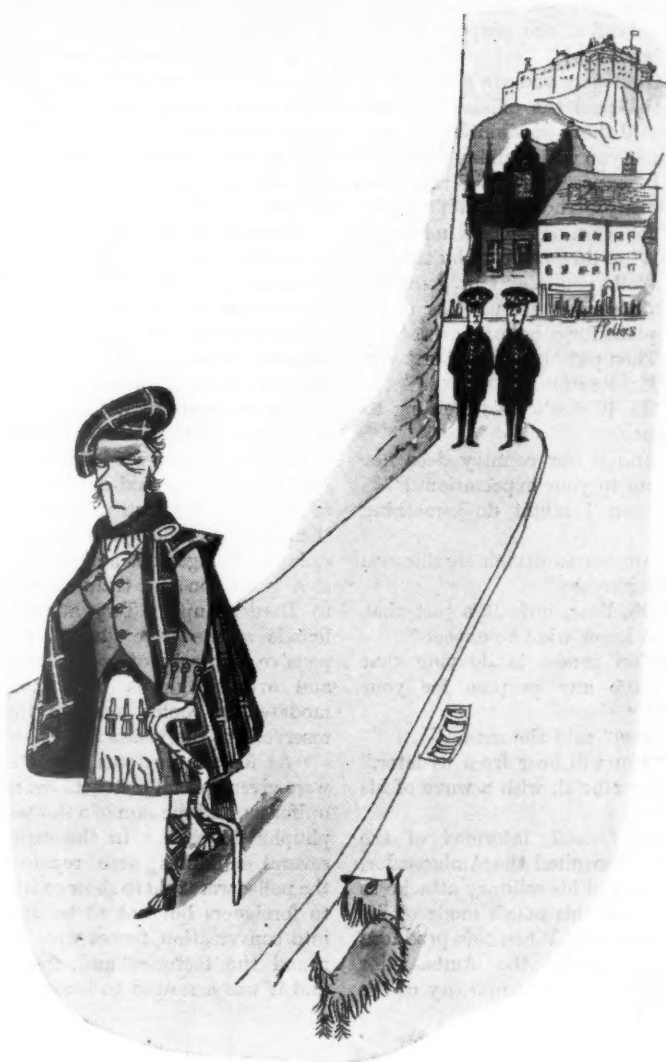
"Then put 'Interest.' That would cover it."

"But I don't know yet if I shall find Transphuphia interesting."

"I must warn you against these provocative remarks," said the official more coldly. "We Transphuphians are a sensitive people. May I ask what you will do in our country if you don't find it interesting?"

"Nothing much. Just sit about."

"Then you can put 'Rest.' Or even 'Relaxation.' You might put 'Reasons of health.' We have several excellent spas."



"I see they've put Pearson on plain-clothes duties."

"But all that is only what I might do, perhaps. It wouldn't be right to call it the purpose of my visit, would it?"

"Obviously you are going for a holiday," said the official. "That covers all these possibilities. I suggest that you put 'Holiday travel.'"

"I suppose so," said the man reluctantly, "though I don't know yet if it'll turn out to be a holiday."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, you see, I'm going to Transphuphia to see whether it's a good place for a holiday or not."

"Then put 'Investigation.' Or else 'Exploration.'"

"Oh, it won't take me long to find out."

"And if our country does not come up to your expectations?"

"Then I might do something else."

"Are we to attach significance to that phrase?"

"Oh, dear, no! It's just that I don't know what to expect."

"You persist in denying that you have any purpose for your visit?"

"Yes," said the man.

"You will hear from us later," said the official, with a wave of his hand.

The Consul, informed of the matter, consulted the Ambassador, who ordered his military attaché to investigate this man's mode of life and contacts. When this produced nothing useful, the Ambassador decided that the complexity of the

matter could not be explained in writing, and caught the next plane to Altphuph.

A Cabinet meeting was called the next day, attended by the chiefs of the armed forces and the Phuphsnoop. A masterly plan was evolved to checkmate the man by doing the opposite of what he had expected. He was granted a visa.

Rooms were reserved for the man at the leading hotels in Altphuph, Phuphstrom, and Phuph Falls. Dictaphones, self-operating cameras and waste-paper baskets with false bottoms were installed in these rooms. After a preliminary conference on what was wittily entitled "Operation Purposeless," members of the Phuphsnoop were disguised as waiters, guides, taxi-drivers, and sellers of picture postcards. One of them was given a quick course in railway management and got a job as a guard on the train that ran to Borderphuph. Two attractive female agents were given an expensive wardrobe of sports dresses and evening gowns and accommodated in rooms next to those reserved for the visitor.

As for the customs men, they were given special instructions, new uniforms, and the sum of a thousand phuphnicks each. In the capital, several buildings were repainted, the police were told to show courtesy to foreigners but not to be drawn into conversation, fences were built round the factories and arsenals, and it was arranged to have copies

of *The Times* flown in every morning and displayed on the news-stands.

The people of Transphuphia, who are a decent, hard-working crowd, paid for all this.

The man found Transphuphia very dull and went home after staying two days.

GARDENING HINTS

I WARN all generous people, who
Invite me down for quiet week-ends,

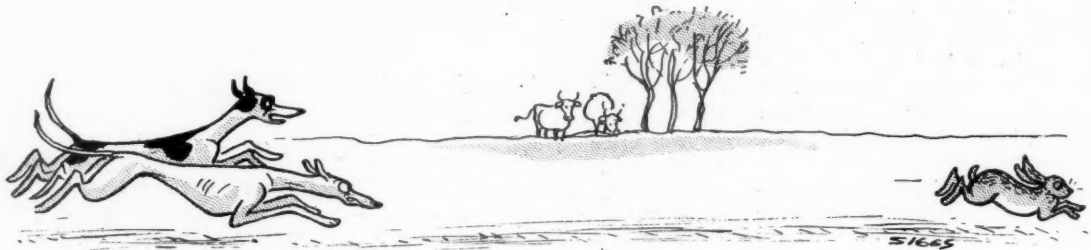
To this resolve I'm always true:
I do not garden for my friends.

All duties of a modern guest
I conscientiously observe,
At washing-up I do my best,
From making beds I never swerve.

I am not difficult to feed,
I leave my shillings for the maid;
But I will neither clip nor weed,
Nor touch the dibble nor the spade.

I gladly listen to their talk
Of soils and double-trenching deep,
Of mould and humus, soot and chalk,
But will not build their compost heap.

Only at dusk, when bonfires start
To send aloft blue drifts of smoke,
The ancient caveman in my heart
Stirs and without one hint I stoke.



"Keep cracking—sometimes a fuse blows."

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6 C.C

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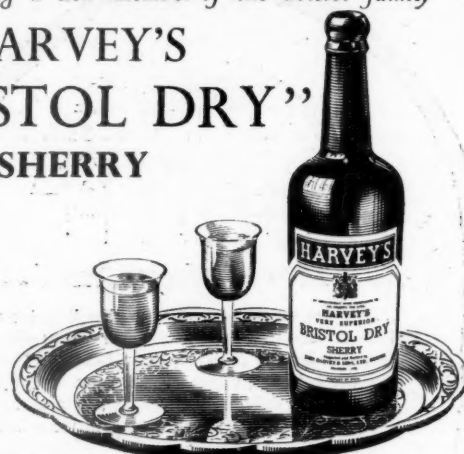
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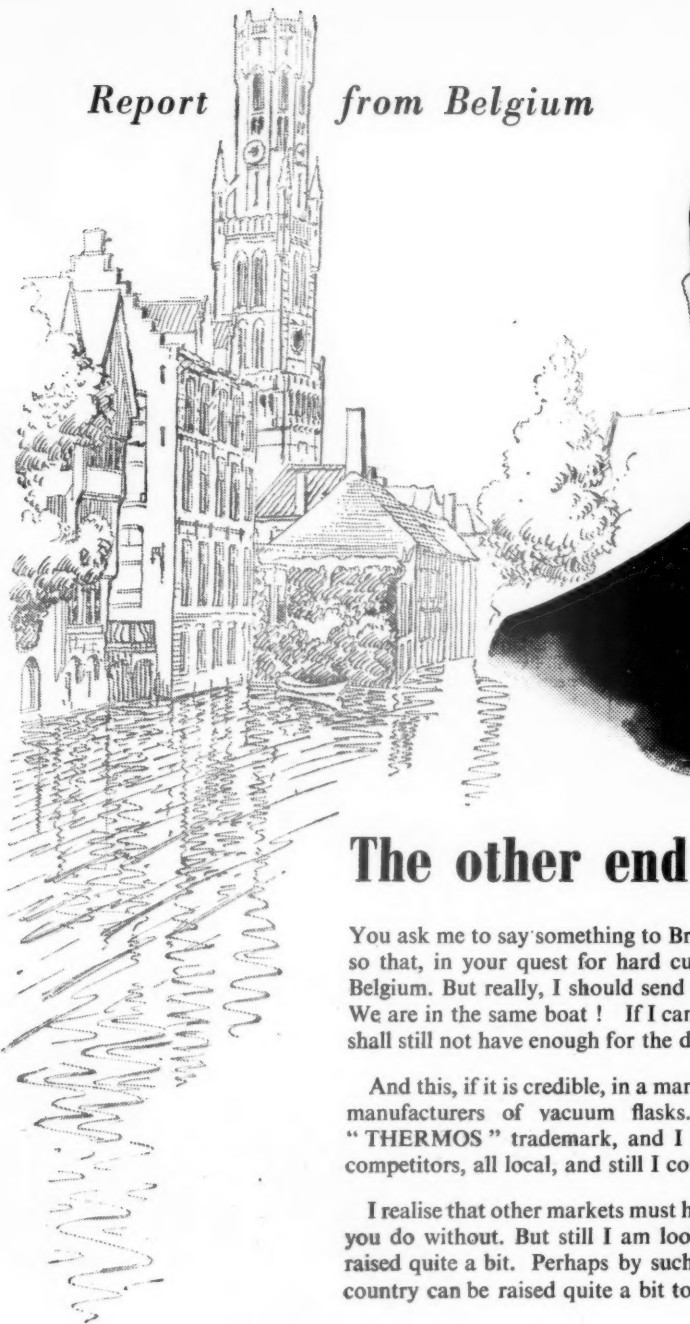
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ANGLO AMERICAN OIL COMPANY LIMITED

Report from Belgium



The other end of the Export drive

You ask me to say something to British readers who must go without Thermos flasks so that, in your quest for hard currency, more of these goods can be exported to Belgium. But really, I should send not an apology but a request for their sympathy. We are in the same boat! If I can get three times my quota of Thermos products, I shall still not have enough for the demand.

And this, if it is credible, in a market where I fight competition from sixteen Belgian manufacturers of vacuum flasks. As the sole agent in Belgium I have the "THERMOS" trademark, and I have Thermos quality. But even so . . . sixteen competitors, all local, and still I could sell more goods than I get!

I realise that other markets must have their share, so I say 'thank-you' for the goods you do without. But still I am looking forward to the day when my quota will be raised quite a bit. Perhaps by such time the quota of British holiday-makers to my country can be raised quite a bit too!

Although the restrictions on purchase of vacuum flasks have been withdrawn since January 1949, we very much regret that the supply of Thermos products to the home market is still much below the level of demand. We believe that "Report from Belgium" will help to explain this shortage as satisfactorily as possible in present circumstances.

Marcel Delanois



Manufacturers of
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to H.M. The King

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Shake well with ice
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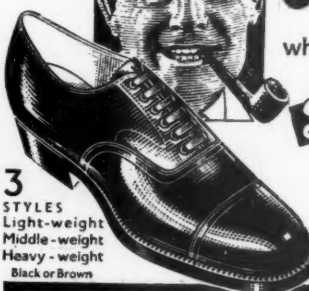
Most people chose the wrong woman when asked in a recent test, which one of these two women wears dentures. It is the younger who has dentures, but who could tell? Many men and women who wear dentures have managed to keep the fact entirely to themselves. Modern dentures, produced by new methods from new

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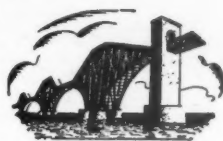


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49 C

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never before such cooking help
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Can't live without it!

Once you live with an Aga you can't live without it, say owners. When they explain, they name first, "Its constant readiness". No fires to light! No waiting for top plates or ovens to heat for cooking—each is *always* at exactly the right temperature for its special task: fast boiling, simmering, baking, roasting or just keeping food warm! Fuel is needed only morning and night. The kitchen is comfortably warm in winter yet cool in summer. And the Aga is so expertly designed to cook to perfection that all fine flavour is saved—food is prepared to please the most particular!

Women like this

"Cleaner kitchen and cooker!" That's another reason why Aga owners never stop their praise. The vitreous-enamel surface is easily wiped clean with a damp cloth. Cooking utensils are not blackened by exposed flames.

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Saves its cost!

But remember! Only the Aga offers all this labour-saving service—with a guaranteed maximum fuel consumption for the year, a maximum so low that fuel savings finally pay the cost of the Aga! Send today for free catalogue. Write to: Aga Heat Ltd., 2 Orchard House, Orchard Street, London, W.1. (Proprietors: Allied Ironfounders Ltd.)

Talk it over
with your family!

*According to a recent survey among Aga owners.

AGA COOKERS AND WATER HEATERS



FARM BABY STARTS THINGS HAPPENING

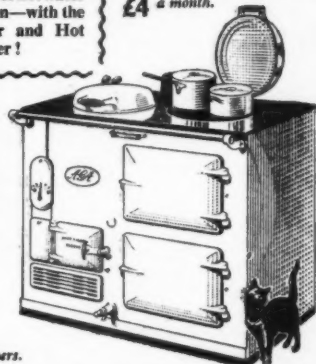
Young Christopher Hoare, 17 months old, is the main reason why there is an Aga Cooker and Water Heater at Hoe Farm, Hunston, near Chichester. Dairy farming is the speciality of this 150-acre farm with its 50 Guernsey cows.

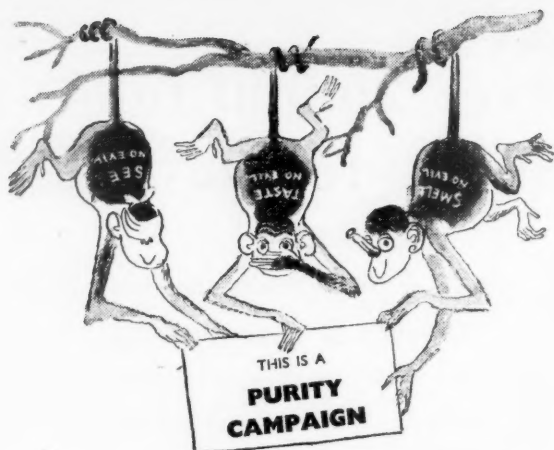
"We realised after Christopher's arrival that we must have lots of hot water and a warm house," says Mrs. Hoare. "We had wanted an Aga, and this provided the opportunity. We're glad we got one. It certainly saves work and money. I now have time and energy for the 'little more than living that makes life worth while'."



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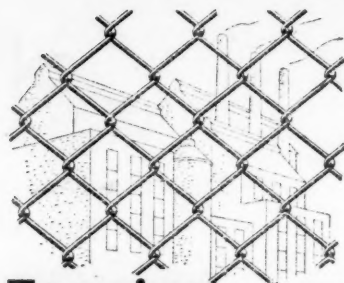
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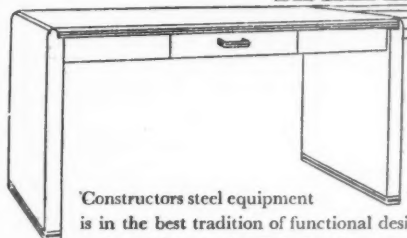
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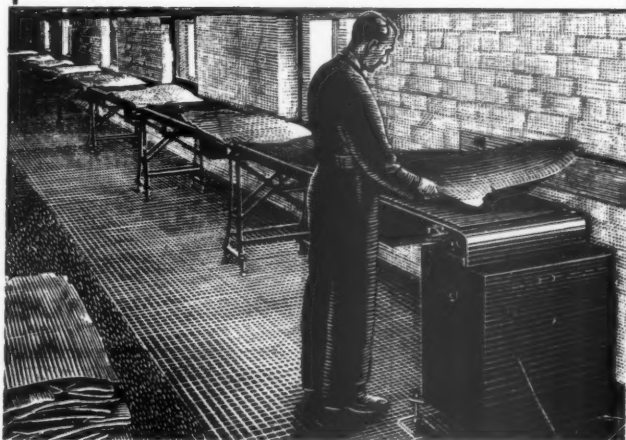
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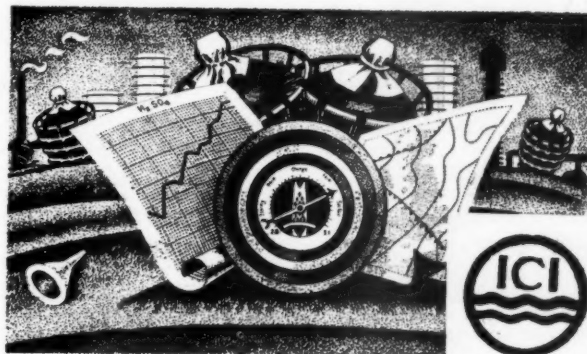
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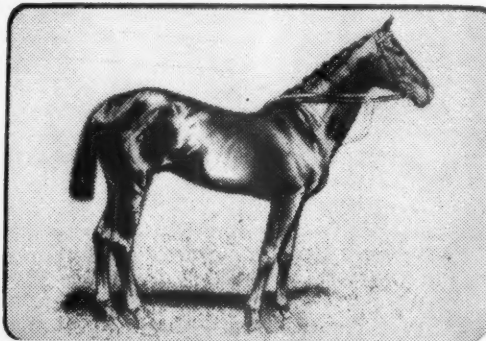
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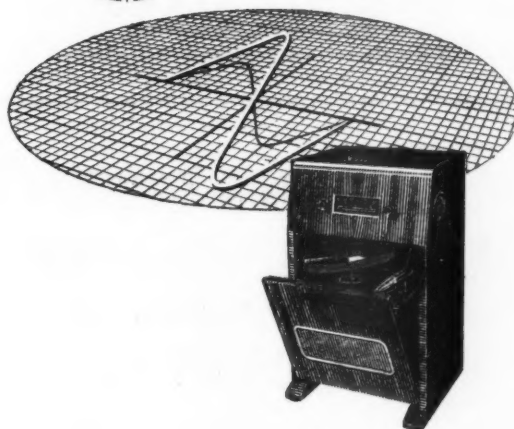
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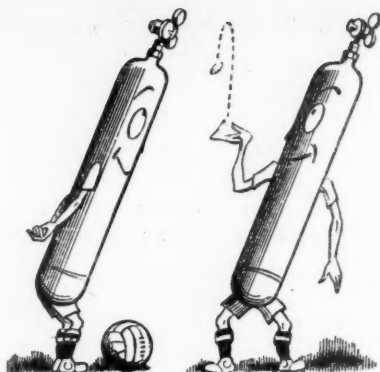


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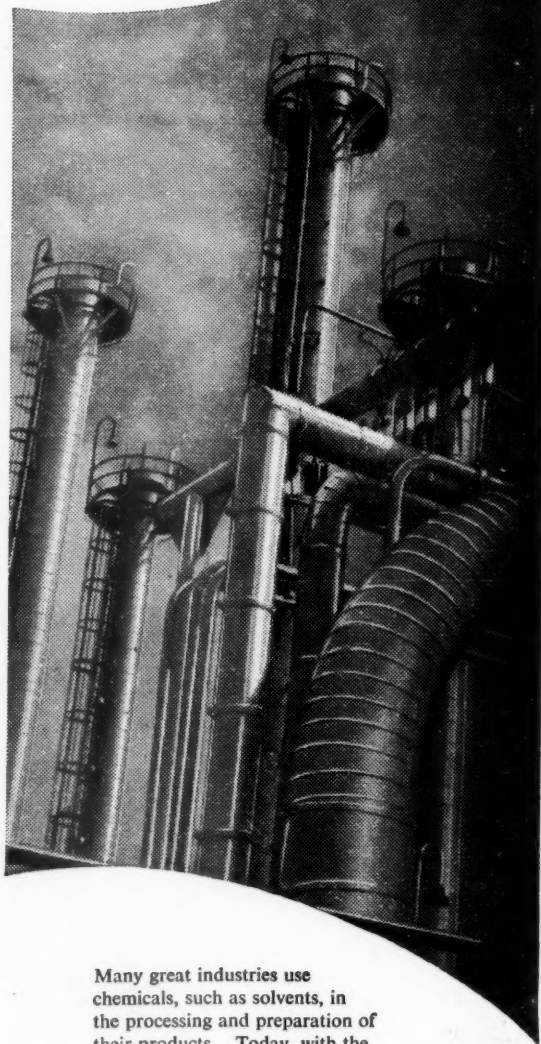
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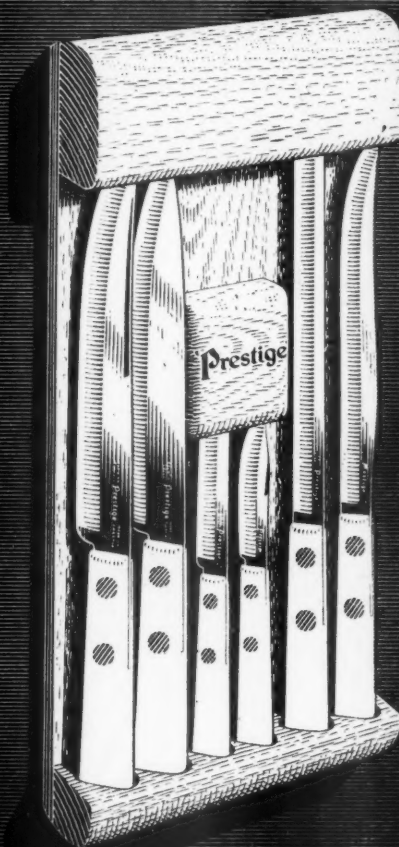


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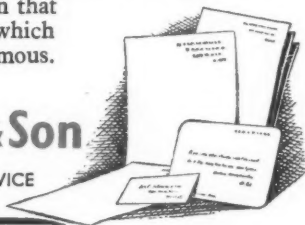
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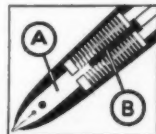


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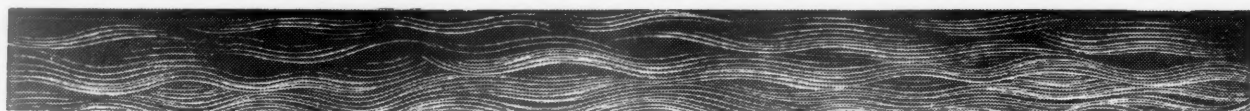
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